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No. 3.

SHAKESPEARE'S
COMEDY OF
THE MERCHANT OF
VENICE

AS PRODUCED BY

EDWIN BOOTH.

Adapted from the Text of the Cambridge Editors, with Introductory Remarks, &c.,

By HENRY L. HINTON.

NEW YORK:

PUBLISHED BY HURD & HOUGHTON,

459 BROOME STREET.

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ENTERED, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1868,

By HENRY L. HINTON,

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Southern District of New York.

INTRODUCTION.

THE *Merchant of Venice* was the first of those greater dramas of Shakespeare which were written in what has been termed the middle period of the poet's career. The materials from which Shakespeare prepared the plot, or, more properly speaking, the plots, of this play, seem to have been derived from various sources. But they receive all their interest from the heightening touch of the poetic artist.

This play was one of those of our author's productions which were severely handled by the 'improvers' of the latter part of the seventeenth century. Indeed, it was not until Macklin restored the original text, in 1741, that the presumptuous 'improvements' of this play were banished from the stage. Macklin's adaptation is the one familiar to the theatre of to-day.

Some may ask: Why make an adaptation at all? why not give the play as Shakespeare composed it? Such should remember, that Shakespeare wrote in a primitive day of stage machinery. His auditors did not demand completeness in scenic effects, properties, and costumes, as do those of our time. A compliance with these modern demands, sometimes necessitates a transposition of scenes, and often a new division of acts and scenes.

Of the performance of this play prior to the restoration of the monarchy, there appear to be no detailed accounts. Richard Burbage, one of the company of which Shakespeare was a member, was the original representative of Shylock. He is spoken of as playing the part in a red beard and wig, a garb adopted, no doubt, to make him the more odious, and to suit the popular appetite of the time.

In 1663, Charles II. granted patents for two theatres in London. The drama again rose and flourished. But what of Shylock? The Jew's

character had been denuded of that dignity and intensity which belongs to the original conception, and he had been forced to wear the garb and mien of a low jester and buffoon. The perverted taste of the last half of the seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth centuries seemed to be unequal to the true appreciation of this grand and gloomy creation of the poet. Yet we hear of such a man as Rowe saying: 'I can not but think the character was *tragically* designed by the author.'

Charles Macklin—of whose Shylock Pope said: 'This is the Jew that Shakespeare drew'—was the first, after the restoration, to play Shylock as a serious part. Doran, in his *Annals of the English Stage*, thus notices this reform:—

'There was a whisper that he was about to play the Jew as a serious character. His comrades laughed, and the manager was nervous. The rehearsals told them nothing, for there Macklin did little more than walk through the part, lest the manager should prohibit the playing of the piece, if the nature of the reform Macklin was about to introduce should make him fearful of consequences. In some such dress as that we now see worn by Shylock, Macklin, on the night of the 15th of February, 1741, walked down the stage, and, looking through the eyelet-hole in the curtain, saw the two ever-formidable front rows of the pit occupied by the most highly-dreaded critics of the period. The house was also densely crowded. He turned from his survey, calm and content, remarking: "Good! I shall be tried to-night, by a special jury!"

'There was little applause, to Macklin's disappointment, on his entrance; yet the people were pleased at the aspect of a Jew whom Rembrandt might have painted. The opening scene was spoken in familiar, but earnest accents. Not a hand yet gave token of approbation, but there occasionally reached Macklin's ears, from the two solemn rows of judge and jury in the pit, the sounds of a "Good!" and "Very good!" "Very well, indeed!" and he passed off, more gratified by this than by the slight general applause intended for encouragement.

'As the play proceeded, so did his triumph grow. In the scene with Tubal, which Doggett, in Lansdowne's version, had made so comic, he shook the hearts, and not the sides, of the audience. There was deep emotion in that critical pit. The sympathies of the house went all for Shylock; and at last, a storm of acclamation, a very hurricane of approval, roared pleasantly over Macklin. So far, all was well; but the trial-scene had yet to come.

‘It came; and there the triumph culminated. The actor was not loud nor grotesque; but Shylock was natural, calmly confident, and so terribly malignant, that when he whetted his knife, “to cut the forfeit from that bankrupt there,” a shudder went round the house, and the profound silence following told Macklin that he held his audience by the heart-strings, and that his hearers must have already acknowledged the truth of his interpretation of Shakespeare’s Jew. When the act-drop fell, then the pent-up feelings found vent, and Old Drury shook again with the tumult of applause.’

Since the time of Macklin, there have been many representatives of Shylock, of great merit; but we have not space to enlarge upon the peculiarities and the great points of these various performances. Edmund Kean was the next to introduce original features into the performance of Shylock. With this part he first entered upon his career of fame; indeed, we may almost say that his *debut* in this *role* rescued him from starvation. The circumstance is beautifully told by Doran:—

‘At the one morning rehearsal, he fluttered his fellow-actors, and scared the manager, by his independence and originality. “Sir, this will never do!” cried Raymond, the acting manager. “It is quite an innovation; it can not be permitted.”—“Sir,” said the poor, proud man, “I wish it to be so!” and the players smiled, and Kean went home—that is, to his lodgings, in Cecil Street—on that snowy, foggy 26th of February, 1814, calm, hopeful, and hungry. “To-day,” said he, “I must *dine*.”

‘Having accomplished that rare feat, he went forth alone, and on foot. “I wish,” he remarked, “I was going to be shot!” He had with him a few properties, which he was bound to procure for himself, tied up in a poor handkerchief, under his arm. His wife remained, with their child, at home. Kean tramped on beneath the falling snow, and over that which thickly encumbered the ground—solid here, there in slush;—and, by and by, pale, quiet, but fearless, he dressed, in a room shared by two or three others, and went down to the wing by which he was to enter. Hitherto, no one had spoken to him save Jack Bannister, who said a cheering word; and Oxberry, who had tendered to him a glass, and wished him good fortune. “By Jove!” exclaimed a first-rater, looking at him, “Shylock in a black wig! Well!”

‘The house could hold, as it is called, £600; there was not more than a sixth of that sum in front. Winter without, his comrades within;—all was against him. At length he went on, with Rae as Bassanio, in ill-humor; and groups of actors at the wings, to witness the first scene of a

new candidate. All that Edmund Kean ever did was gracefully done; and the bow which he made, in return to the usual welcoming applause, was eminently graceful. Dr. Drury, the head master of Harrow, who took great interest in him, looked fixedly at him as he came forward. Shylock leant over his crutched stick, with both hands; and, looking askance at Bassanio, said: "Three thousand ducats?" paused, bethought himself, and then added: "Well?" "*He is safe,*" said Dr. Drury.

'The groups of actors soon after dispersed to the green-room. As they reached it, there reached there, too, an echo of the loud applause given to Shylock's reply to Bassanio's assurance that he may take the bond: "*I will be assured I may!*" Later came the sounds of the increased approbation bestowed on the delivery of the passage ending with: "And for these courtesies, I'll lend you thus much moneys." The act came to an end gloriously; and the players in the green-room looked for the coming among them of the new Shylock. He proudly kept aloof; knew he was friendless, but felt that he was, in himself, sufficient.

'He wandered about the back of the stage, thinking, perhaps, of the mother and child at home; and sure, now, of having at least made a step toward triumph. He wanted no congratulations; and he walked cheerfully down to the wing where the scene was about to take place between him and his daughter, Jessica, in his very calling to whom: "Why, Jessica! I say," there was, as some of us may remember, from an after-night's experience, a charm, as of music. The whole scene was played with rare merit; but the absolute triumph was not won till the scene (which was marvelous in his hands) in the third act, between Shylock, Solanio, and Salarino, ending with the dialogue between the first and Tubal. Shylock's anguish at his daughter's flight; his wrath at the two Christians, who make sport of his anguish; his hatred of all Christians, generally, and of Antonio in particular; and then his alternations of rage, grief, and ecstasy, as Tubal relates the losses incurred in the search for that naughty Jessica, her extravagances, and then the ill-luck that had fallen upon Antonio. In all this, there was such originality, such terrible force, such assurance of a new and mighty master, that the house burst forth into a very whirlwind of approbation. "What now?" was the cry in the green-room. The answer was, that the presence and the power of the genius were acknowledged with an enthusiasm which shook the very roof.'

Dunlap, in his *History of the American Theatre*, says: 'On the 5th of September, 1752, at Williamsburg, the capital of Virginia, the first play

performed in America, by a regular company of comedians, was represented to a delighted audience. The piece was *The Merchant of Venice*.* Subsequent writers have shown this statement to be erroneous,* and that while *The Merchant of Venice* may have then for the first time been presented to an American audience, it was preceded by *Richard III.* and *Othello*, at New York. *Richard III.* was given, as probably the first effort of a company of Thespians in that city, on the 5th of March, 1750. It will interest Knickerbockers to know that the theatre which witnessed this early performance was situated, as shown by J. N. Ireland, in his *Records of the New York Stage*, 'on the east side of Nassau Street (formerly Kip Street), between John Street and Maiden Lane, on lots now known by the numbers 64 and 66 (1866).' The performers on this occasion, it will please the good people of the City of Brotherly Love to learn, were driven from Philadelphia as a set of 'vagabonds.'

The Merchant of Venice was, without doubt, introduced to the New York audience in the fall of 1753, by the same company which, as Dunlap states, opened in Williamsburg a year previous. From that day to this, the play has stood among the first in favor in New York and other principal cities of the country.

Of all the actors who have essayed the rôle of Shylock on our American stage, no one seems to have left so lasting an impression as Junius Brutus Booth. The following *critique* will give the reader, who may not have had the good fortune to see and hear for himself, a conception of the 'elder Booth's' peculiar rendition of this character:—

'Booth's interpretation of the part of Shylock differed greatly from that which was popular on the stage of his day. The superficial features of the Jew's character are patent to every one—his greed, his miserliness, his implacable revengefulness;—but, in the refined handling of this great artist, these traits were made the mere outworks behind which was seated a grand reserved force, which the spectator found it difficult to analyze, but the presence of which was none the less powerfully felt. The Jew stood forth

* As early as 1733 there existed a 'play house' in New York, but the legitimate drama was performed, if at all, in a very crude manner, the play-house being used principally for puppet-shows and entertainments of like character. It is more than probable that the first company of English actors which crossed the Atlantic first appeared in 1746, in Jamaica, West Indies. The second company, as mentioned by Dunlap, crossed in 1752, and appeared in Williamsburg, Virginia. These two companies afterward united, forming what was long known as the American Company.

as the representative of his race ; he wrapped up in himself the dignity of the patriarchs of his people. But this does not express all ; in the person of Shylock, as given by Booth, the old faith, recognizing justice alone, not mercy—"an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth"—was brought into contrast with that which superseded it, as represented in the person of Antonio and beautifully expounded by Portia. Mercy "is twice blessed ; it blesses him that gives, and him that takes," saith Portia. "I crave the law," saith the Jew.

'No man was more catholic in his sentiments than Booth. He read the Koran, and often attended the synagogues. He sympathized with the Jews as an oppressed and reviled race, and knew how to assume the Hebraic stand-point. The Jewish race stood to him for an idea—the inexorableness of law ; and the conception of a people selected as the guardian and minister of this law,—as the arm of fate,—affected his imagination profoundly. Why shall not Shylock exact his usances ? Why shall he not demand the penalty and forfeit of his bond ? Are they not all Christian dogs—gentiles, accursed by the law ? In the person of Shylock, Booth embodied all this gloomy grandeur of position, this merciless absoluteness of will. Yet Shylock's more special personality—if we may so express it—his hatred of Antonio, not simply "for he is a Christian," but because he has hindered him in his usurious practices, was not merged and lost in his representative character. Booth kept the two distinct, skillfully using the former in order to throw out in darker background the shadowy presence of the latter. Finely in keeping with this rendering of the part, is the exit of Shylock from the machinery of the piece on the termination of the fourth act. The lighter and more graceful work of the play goes on ; but Shylock withdraws, and with him this grand, gloomy, cruel past, which he represents, while the light-hearted, forgiving, and forgiven children of the day bring all their wishes to a happy consummation.'

COSTUME.

Shakespeare's own time has been usually set as the period of the action of this play, but the costume in Venice at that epoch was, in many instances, so eccentric, that, were it strictly adhered to in representation, 'it is to be feared,' as Grant White remarks, 'that the splendor and faithfulness of the scene would be forgotten in its absurdity, and that the audience would explode in fits of uncontrollable laughter, as the various

personages came upon the stage.' Fancy 'Antonio with a bonnet like an inverted porringer shadowing his melancholy countenance,' and his trunk-hose puffed out with bombast to an enormous sise. Fancy the gifted Portia mounted on *Cioppini*, or, as they have been called, 'wooden scaffolds'—'things made of wood, and covered with leather of sundry colors,' which were sometimes 'half a yard high,' or, as another account says, 'as high as a man's leg.' Fancy Portia, thus gigantically proportioned, led in by 'two maids, to keep her from falling.'

Mr. Grant White, recognizing these absurdities, says:—'Any Italian costume, rich, beautiful, and sufficiently antique to remove the action out of the range of present probabilities, will meet the dramatic requirements of this play; but the orange-tawny bonnet, that mark of an outcast race, ought not to be missed from the brow of Shylock. This, however, is allowing rather more freedom than will meet the approval of the general public who, when a play is submitted to them on the stage, demand a consistent historical picture.'

The male attire of this period, or such of it, at least, as distinguished the higher class, may be considered of two kinds: that one which was used on festive occasions, or in gayer moods, by all ages, and which was worn at all times, by young gallants who had not reached the age of 'eighteen or twenty,' and that one which pertained to sedater moods, and occasions of state. Knight, quoting Vecellio, has given an interesting description of these habits. 'Young lovers,' he tells us, 'wear, generally, a doublet and breeches of satin, tabby, or other silk, cut or slashed in the form of crosses or stars, through which slashes is seen the lining of colored taffeta; gold buttons, a lace ruff, a bonnet of rich velvet, or silk, with an ornamental band, a silk cloak, and silk stockings, Spanish morocco shoes, a flower in one hand, and their gloves and handkerchief in the other. This habit was worn by many of the nobility, as well of Venice as of other Italian cities.' Illustrations in Ferrario represent the high bonnet as in some instances substituted by the more reasonable cap, but in no instance are feathers worn, and the breeches are always puffed out to an enormous size. Full but not very long beards were general.

The other habit, which, as we have said, belonged to maturer years and dignified occasions, consisted of a gown, which was sometimes worn over the gay attire above described. This robe received special modifications, adapting it to the special occasions and particular offices; it may be termed the common exterior dress of the Venetians.

The robe or gown of the Doge was of silk of a purple dye, or sometimes of cloth of gold; it came down to the feet, and was encircled about his waist with a richly embroidered belt. Over this was thrown a mantle of cloth of silver, so long as to trail to some extent upon the ground. These garments were 'adorned with many curious works, made in colors with needlework.' Finally, a cape of ermine encompassed his shoulders and reached to the elbows. His head was covered with a thin coif, over which he wore a mitre, corresponding in color with the robe and mantle, and which turned up behind, in the form of a horn. His feet were encased in slippers, or, according to some accounts, sandals.

The chiefs of the Council of Ten, three in number, wore red gowns, with red stockings and slippers; the other seven were attired the same, only the color was black. These gowns hung loose, and extended nearly to the ground. A flap, three or four inches wide, of the same color as the gowns, or sometimes black, was worn on the red gowns, and thrown over the left shoulder. The sleeves were large and flowing, reaching almost to the ground. 'All these gowned men,' says Croyat, 'do wear marvelous little black caps of felt, without any brims at all, and very diminutive falling bands, no ruffs at all, which are so shallow, that I have seen many of them not above a little inch deep.'

For the dress of the Doctor of Laws, Knight gives the following from Vecellio:—'The upper robe was of black damask cloth, velvet, or silk, according to the weather. The under one of black silk, with a silk sash, the ends of which hang down to the middle of the leg; the stockings of black cloth or velvet, the cap of rich velvet or silk.' The sleeves of the gown of the Doctor of Law, though very full, were tight at the wrist; and a flap, as in the case of the Council, thrown over the left shoulder. The lawyer's clerk was also dressed in black, the gown extending about to the ankles.

Gondoliers in Ferrario are represented in tight-fitting jackets and breeches. Pages and servants, in jackets and short trunks; artisans, in short gowns.

But how are Shylock and the 'pretty Jessica' to be attired?

Touching the dress of Jewish women, Cæsar Vecellio, in his *Habiti Antichi et Moderni*, 1598, says that they wore yellow veils, but in other respects differed not from Christian women of the same rank. They were distinguished, however, by being 'highly painted.'

The Jewish men also differed in nothing, in respect of dress, from

Venetians of the same walk, except that they were compelled, by order of the government, to wear a yellow bonnet. The story is, that the color was changed from red to yellow because a Jew was accidentally taken for a cardinal. Saint Didier, it is true, in his *'Histoire de Venise,'* says that the color of the bonnet was 'scarlet;' but the best authority, Vecellio, reports that it was yellow. 'It is not impossible,' as Knight remarks, 'that the "orange-tawny bonnet" might have been worn of so deep a color, by some of the Hebrew population, as to have been described as red by a careless observer, or that some Venetian Jews, in fact, did venture to wear red caps or bonnets in defiance of the statutes, and thereby misled the traveler or the historian.' Shylock speaks of his 'Jewish gaberdine.' In old English this word was applied to a loose, coarse, and, perhaps, motley garment, worn by a prescribed class, or the poorer sort; and in Scottish dialect it still retains this usage. Shakespeare, therefore, caring only for the picturesque appointments of his play, seems to have meant, by the 'Jewish gaberdine,' an article of dress distinctive of the Hebrew class; nor in this case can we introduce historical accuracy of costume without marring the effect of the piece.

It is seen, then, in some instances to be advantageous, and in others to be strictly necessary, to modify the costume in putting this great work of our author upon the stage. We have said that Shakespeare's own day is the time usually set for the action of this drama, but the stories upon which it is founded being much older, we are at liberty to assign it an earlier period. The dress worn by the youth of the latter part of the fourteenth and during the fifteenth centuries contains many elegant features, and may be adopted in part, or in all its details, with good effect.

Ferrario thus describes the toilet of young noblemen of this period: 'They brought a few curls over the forehead, and allowed the rest of the hair to fall in waves upon the shoulders; they donned a coat, which reached to the middle of the leg, and was embroidered with various flowers in silk and gold, and was fastened in front with gold buttons and gathered about the waist with a silk belt, from which hung a sword on the left side; this coat was adorned with lace, and had a hood, which hung down below the belt; the sleeves enveloped the arm as far as the elbow, and then hung open in more or less long pendants. They wore hose of red cloth, and low, laced shoes.' In other instances, this upper garment, according to the same author, was much shorter, sometimes not covering the hips; in this case it has tight sleeves reaching to the wrist. The hoods 'were very

small, and had "beaks" falling back almost to the ground.' 'The men were also adorned with necklaces or bands of silver, studded with pearls or red coral, and many young men went bearded.' Another variety of this dress, peculiar perhaps to a somewhat more youthful age, consists of a striped hose extending up the whole leg, and a doublet or jacket, 'open at the breast and tightened about the loins with a belt, after the manner of the ladies of our time.' Ferrario pronounces this costume 'simple and beautiful.' Wahlen, in describing the dress of a young Venetian of this period, adds to details similar to those above given, that of a cloak, thrown over and completely enveloping the coat or doublet, and reaching as low as the breech. This cloak is lined with material of a different color, and is edged with gold. It does not 'open on the side, but is looped up to the right shoulder.' With this was worn, for 'coiffeur,' a linen bonnet of some rich color, and of moderate height.

At the various revivals of *The Merchant of Venice*, it has been customary to adopt, in the male attire, what is called the 'Venetian' or 'Elizabethan Shape,'—a dress similar to that described in the early part of this article, as worn by 'young lovers.' But the puffing out of the breeches with bombast, to an enormous extent, has never, and perhaps with good reason, been introduced. The dress to which we have given the preference, the distinguishing mark of which is what is known on the stage as 'the hauberk,' may be followed with more historical fidelity, and is undoubtedly the more picturesque of the two.

We have seen that, in our author's time, the female dress was marked with absurdities of a nature that would prevent its being faithfully reproduced on the stage. Therefore, if we would array our Portia, Nerrissa, and Jessica, in a becoming costume, we must look for materials to some earlier age. Cæsar Vecellio (vol. 1, plate 48) describes a dress peculiar to the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, which we think would be well suited to Portia, and the style could be easily modified in adaptation to the other characters of the drama. 'The hair of the women was plaited and gathered up under a small crown, *à la ducale*. They wore collars ornamented with corals and silver balls, and very often a band of real or imitation gold. The robe, though cut to fit close to the waist, was not stiffened with stays; the upper part, which covered the breast, was loaded with pretty golden ornaments. The sleeves reached but to the elbow, and the rest of the arm to the wrist had no other covering than the chemise; a richly embroidered trimming adorned the bottom of this robe, which

was furnished with a long train.' A string of corals and silver balls, to match the ornaments of the collar, hung loosely from the waist. In the figure given in *Vecellio* in illustration of this costume, the left hand gathers up a portion of this long outer robe in such a manner as to display the undergarment, which is of brocade. A broad cuff confines the loose undersleeves. The shoes are pointed. Shakespeare has designated the color of Portia's hair :—

‘Hèr sunny locks
Hang on her temples like a golden fleece.’

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Of this adaptation of *The Merchant of Venice* as cast for its first representation at Booth's Theatre, New York,—————.

DUKE OF VENICE. ....	.....	
PRINCE OF MOROCCO, suitor to Portia.....	.....	
ANTONIO, a merchant of Venice.....	.....	
BASSANIO, his friend, suitor likewise to Portia.....	.....	
SALANIO,	}	friends to Antonio and Bassanio. {	
SALARINO,		
GRATIANO,		
SALERIO,		
LORENZO, in love with Jessica.....	.....	
SHYLOCK, a rich Jew .....	.....	
TUBAL, a Jew, his friend.....	.....	
LAUNCELOT GOBBO, the clown, servant to Shylock.....	.....	
OLD GOBBO, father to Launcelot.....	.....	
LEONARDO, servant to Bassanio.....	.....	
BALTHASAR,	}	servants to Portia. {	
STEPHANO,		
Clerk of the court of justice .....		.....

PORTIA, a rich heiress .....	.....
NERISSA, her waiting-maid.....	.....
JESSICA, daughter to Shylock.....	.....

Magnificoes of Venice, Officers of the Court of Justice, Musicians,
Servants to Portia, and other Attendants.

SCENE: *Partly at Venice, and partly at Belmont, the seat of Portia
on the Continent.*



NOTE.—The asterisks that occasionally appear in the text, refer to the glossary.

THE
MERCHANT OF VENICE.

ACT I.

SCENE I. *Venice. A street.*

Enter ANTONIO, SALARINO, *and* SALANIO.

Ant. In sooth, I know not why I am so sad :
It wearies me ; you say it wearies you ;
But how I caught it, found it, or came by it,
What stuff 'tis made of, whereof it is born,
I am to learn ;
And such a want-wit sadness makes of me,
That I have much ado to know myself.

Salar. Your mind is tossing on the ocean ;
There, where your argosies* with portly sail,
Like signiors and rich burghers on the flood,¹
Or, as it were, the pageants of the sea,
Do overpeer the petty traffickers,
That curt'sy to them, do them reverence,
As they fly by them with their woven wings.

¹ The 'signiors and rich burghers on the flood,' are the Venetians, who may well be said to live on the sea.--DOUCE.

Salan. Believe me, sir, had I such venture forth,
 The better part of my affections would
 Be with my hopes abroad. I should be still
 Plucking the grass, to know where sits the wind ;¹
 Peering in maps for ports, and piers, and roads ;
 And every object that might make me fear
 Misfortune to my ventures, out of doubt,
 Would make me sad.

Salar. My wind, cooling my broth,
 Would blow me to an ague, when I thought
 What harm a wind too great at sea might do.
 I should not see the sandy hour-glass run,
 But I should think of shallows and of flats,
 And see my wealthy Andrew² dock'd in sand
 Vailing * her high-top lower than her ribs
 To kiss her burial. Should I go to church
 And see the holy edifice of stone,
 And not bethink me straight of dangerous rocks,
 Which touching but my gentle vessel's side,
 Would scatter all her spices on the stream ;
 Enrobe the roaring waters with my silks ;
 And, in a word, but even now worth this,
 And now worth nothing ? Shall I have the thought
 To think on this ; and shall I lack the thought,
 That such a thing bechanced would make me sad ?
 But tell not me ; I know, Antonio
 Is sad to think upon his merchandise.

Ant. Believe me, no : I thank my fortune for it,
 My ventures are not in one bottom trusted,
 Nor to one place ; nor is my whole estate
 Upon the fortune of this present year :
 Therefore my merchandise makes me not sad.

¹ By holding up the grass, or any other light body that will bend by a gentle blast, the direction of the wind is found.

² This name was probably a common one for ships, in compliment to Andrea Doria, the great Genoese Admiral.

Salar. Why, then you are in love.

Ant. Fie, fie !

Salar. Not in love neither ? Then let us say you are sad,
Because you are not merry : and 'twere as easy
For you to laugh, and leap, and say you are merry,
Because you are not sad. Now, by two-headed Janus,
Nature hath framed strange fellows in her time :
Some that will evermore peep through their eyes,
And laugh like parrots at a bag-piper ;
And other of such vinegar aspect,
That they'll not show their teeth in way of smile,
Though Nestor swear the jest be laughable.

Salan. Here comes Bassanio, your most noble kinsman,
Gratiano, and Lorenzo. Fare ye well :
We leave you now with better company.

Salar. I would have stay'd till I had made you merry,
If worthier friends had not prevented me.

Ant. Your worth is very dear in my regard.
I take it, your own business calls on you,
And you embrace the occasion to depart.

Enter BASSANIO, LORENZO, and GRATIANO.

Salar. Good morrow, my good lords.

Bass. Good signiors both, when shall we laugh ? say, when ?
You grow exceeding strange : must it be so ?

Salar. We'll make our leisures to attend on yours.

[Exeunt Salarino and Salanio.]

Lor. My Lord Bassanio, since you have found Antonio,
We two will leave you : but, at dinner-time,
I pray you, have in mind where we must meet.

Bass. I will not fail you.

Gra. You look not well, Signior Antonio ;
You have too much respect upon the world :
They lose it that do buy it with much care :
Believe me, you are marvellously changed.

Ant. I hold the world but as the world, Gratiano ;
A stage, where every man must play a part,
And mine a sad one.

Gra. Let me play the fool :
With mirth and laughter let old wrinkles come ;
And let my liver rather heat with wine
Than my heart cool with mortifying groans.
Why should a man, whose blood is warm within,
Sit like his grandsire cut in alabaster ?
Sleep when he wakes, and creep into the jaundice
By being peevish ? I tell thee what, Antonio,—
I love thee, and it is my love that speaks,—
There are a sort of men, whose visages
Do cream and mantle like a standing pond ;
And do a wilful stillness entertain,
With purpose to be dress'd in an opinion
Of wisdom, gravity, profound conceit ;
As who should say, 'I am Sir Oracle,
And, when I ope my lips, let no dog bark !'
O my Antonio, I do know of these,
That therefore only are reputed wise
For saying nothing ; when, I am very sure,
If they should speak, would almost damn those ears,
Which, hearing them, would call their brothers fools.
I'll tell thee more of this another time :
But fish not, with this melancholy bait,
For this fool gudgeon, this opinion.
Come, good Lorenzo. Fare ye well awhile :
I'll end my exhortation after dinner.¹

Lor. Well, we will leave you, then, till dinner-time :
I must be one of these same dumb wise men,
For Gratiano never lets me speak.

¹ The humor of this consists in its being an allusion to the practice of the Puritan preachers of those times ; who, being generally very long and tedious, were often forced to put off that part of their sermon called the *exhortation* till after dinner.—WARBURTON.

Gra. Well, keep me company but two years more,
Thou shalt not know the sound of thine own tongue.

Ant. Farewell: I'll grow a talker for this gear.*

Gra. Thanks, i' faith; for silence is only commendable
In a neat's tongue dried, and a maid not vendible.

[*Exeunt Gratiano and Lorenzo.*]

Ant. Is that any thing now?

Bass. Gratiano speaks an infinite deal of nothing, more than
any man in all Venice. His reasons are as two grains of wheat
hid in two bushels of chaff: you shall seek all day ere you find
them: and when you have them, they are not worth the search.

Ant. Well, tell me now, what lady is the same
To whom you swore a secret pilgrimage,
That you to-day promised to tell me of?

Bass. 'Tis not unknown to you, Antonio,
How much I have disabled mine estate,
By something showing a more swelling port
Than my faint means would grant continuance:
Nor do I now make moan to be abridged
From such a noble rate; but my chief care
Is, to come fairly off from the great debts,
Wherein my time, something too prodigal,
Hath left me gaged. To you, Antonio,
I owe the most, in money and in love;
And from your love I have a warranty
To unburden all my plots and purposes
How to get clear of all the debts I owe.

Ant. I pray you, good Bassanio, let me know it;
And if it stand, as you yourself still do,
Within the eye of honour, be assured,
My purse, my person, my extremest means,
Lie all unlock'd to your occasions..

Bass. In my school-days, when I had lost one shaft,
I shot his fellow of the self-same flight
The self-same way with more advised watch,

To find the other forth ; and by adventuring both,
I oft found both : I urge this childhood proof,
Because what follows is pure innocence.
I owe you much ; and, like a wilful youth,
That which I owe is lost : but if you please
To shoot another arrow that self way
Which you did shoot the first, I do not doubt,
As I will watch the aim, or to find both,
Or bring your latter hazard back again,
And thankfully rest debtor for the first.

Ant. You know me well ; and herein spend but time
To wind about my love with circumstance ;
And out of doubt you do me now more wrong
In making question of my uttermost,
Than if you had made waste of all I have :
Then do but say to me what I should do,
That in your knowledge may by me be done,
And I am prest * unto it : therefore, speak.

Bass. In Belmont is a lady richly left ;
And she is fair, and, fairer than that word,
Of wondrous virtues : sometimes * from her eyes
I did receive fair speechless messages :
Her name is Portia ; nothing undervalued
To Cato's daughter, Brutus' Portia :
Nor is the wide world ignorant of her worth ;
For the four winds blow in from every coast
Renowned suitors : and her sunny locks
Hang on her temples like a golden fleece ;
Which makes her seat of Belmont Colchos' strond,
And many Jasons come in quest of her.
O my Antonio, had I but the means
To hold a rival place with one of them,
I have a mind presages me such thrift,
That I should questionless be fortunate !

Ant. Thou know'st that all my fortunes are at sea ;

Neither have I money, nor commodity
To raise a present sum : therefore go forth ;
Try what my credit can in Venice do :
That shall be rack'd, even to the uttermost,
To furnish thee to Belmont, to fair Portia.
Go, presently inquire, and so will I,
Where money is ; and I no question make,
To have it of my trust, or for my sake.

[*Exeunt.*]SCENE II. *Belmont. A room in Portia's house.**Enter PORTIA and NERISSA.*

Por. By my troth, Nerissa, my little body is aweary of this great world.

Ner. You would be, sweet madam, if your miseries were in the same abundance as your good fortunes are : and yet, for aught I see, they are as sick that surfeit with too much, as they that starve with nothing. It is no mean happiness, therefore, to be seated in the mean : superfluity comes sooner by white hairs ;¹ but competency lives longer.

Por. Good sentences, and well pronounced.

Ner. They would be better, if well followed.

Por. If to do were as easy as to know what were good to do, chapels had been churches, and poor men's cottages princes' palaces. It is a good divine that follows his own instructions : I can easier teach twenty what were good to be done, than be one of the twenty to follow mine own teaching. The brain may devise laws for the blood ; but a hot temper leaps o'er a cold decree : such a hare is madness the youth, to skip o'er the meshes of good counsel the cripple. But this reasoning is not in the fashion to choose me a husband. O me, the word 'choose' ! I may neither choose whom I would, nor refuse whom I dislike ; so is the

¹ That is, superfluity sooner acquires white hairs ; becomes old. We still say, How did he *come by it*.—MALONE.

will of a living daughter curbed by the will of a dead father. Is it not hard, Nerissa, that I cannot choose one, nor refuse none?

Ner. Your father was ever virtuous; and holy men, at their death, have good inspirations: therefore, the lottery, that he hath devised in these three chests of gold, silver, and lead,—whereof who chooses his meaning chooses you,—will, no doubt, never be chosen by any rightly, but one who shall rightly love. But what warmth is there in your affection towards any of these princely suitors that are already come?

Por. I pray thee, over-name them; and as thou namest them, I will describe them; and, according to my description, level at my affection.

Ner. First, there is the Neapolitan prince.

Por. Ay, that's a colt indeed,¹ for he doth nothing but talk of his horse; and he makes it a great appropriation to his own good parts, that he can shoe him himself.

Ner. Then there is the County Palatine.

Por. He doth nothing but frown; as who should say, 'if you will not have me, choose:' he hears merry tales, and smiles not: I fear he will prove the weeping philosopher² when he grows old, being so full of unmannerly sadness in his youth. I had rather be married to a death's-head with a bone in his mouth than to either of these. Heaven defend me from these two!

Ner. How say you by the French lord, Monsieur Le Bon?

Por. God made him, and therefore let him pass for a man. In truth, I know it is a sin to be a mocker: but, he!—why, he hath a horse better than the Neapolitan's; a better bad habit of frowning than the Count Palatine: he is every man in no man; if a throstle sing, he falls straight a capering: he will fence with his own shadow: if I should marry him, I should marry twenty

¹ This term is applied to the Prince in question, on account of the high repute of the Neapolitan horsemanship.

² Heraclitus, a philosopher of Athens, so called; who, whenever he went abroad, wept at the miseries of the world.—GREY.

husbands. If he would despise me, I would forgive him ; for if he love me to madness, I shall never requite him.

Ner. What say you, then, to Falconbridge, the young baron of England ?

Por. You know I say nothing to him ; for he understands not me, nor I him : he hath neither Latin, French, nor Italian ; and you will come into the court and swear that I have a poor pennyworth in the English. He is a proper* man's picture ; but, alas, who can converse with a dumbshow ? How oddly he is suited ! I think he bought his doublet in Italy, his round hose in France, his bonnet in Germany, and his behaviour every where.

Ner. What think you of the Scottish lord, his neighbour ?

Por. That he hath a neighbourly charity in him ; for he borrowed a box of the ear of the Englishman, and swore he would pay him again when he was able : I think the Frenchman became his surety, and sealed under for another.

Ner. How like you the young German, the Duke of Saxony's nephew ?

Por. Very vilely in the morning, when he is sober ; and most vilely in the afternoon, when he is drunk : when he is best, he is little worse than a man ; and when he is worst, he is little better than a beast : an the worst fall that ever fell, I hope I shall make shift to go without him.

Ner. If he should offer to choose, and choose the right casket, you should refuse to perform your father's will, if you should refuse to accept him.

Por. Therefore, for fear of the worst, I pray thee, set a deep glass of Rhenish wine on the contrary casket ; for, if the devil be within and that temptation without, I know he will choose it. I will do any thing, Nerissa, ere I'll be married to a sponge.

Ner. You need not fear, lady, the having any of these lords : they have acquainted me with their determinations ; which is, indeed, to return to their home, and to trouble you with no more suit, unless you may be won by some other sort* than your father's imposition,* depending on the caskets.

Por. If I live to be as old as Sibylla, I will die as chaste as Diana, unless I be obtained by the manner of my father's will. I am glad this parcel of wooers are so reasonable; for there is not one among them but I dote on his very absence; and I wish them a fair departure.

Ner. Do you not remember, lady, in your father's time, a Venetian, a scholar, and a soldier, that came hither in company of the Marquis of Montferrat?

Por. Yes, yes, it was Bassanio; as I think he was so called.

Ner. True, madam: he, of all the men that ever my foolish eyes looked upon, was the best deserving a fair lady.

Por. I remember him well; and I remember him worthy of thy praise.

Enter BALTHASAR.

How now! what news?

Balth. The four strangers seek for you, madam, to take their leave: and there is a forerunner come from a fifth, the Prince of Morocco; who brings word, the prince his master will be here to-night.

Por. If I could bid the fifth welcome with so good a heart as I can bid the other four farewell, I should be glad of his approach: if he have the condition* of a saint and the complexion of a devil, I had rather he should shrive* me than wive me.

Come, Nerissa. Sirrah, go before.

Whiles we shut the gates upon one wooer, another knocks at the door.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. *Venice. A public place.*

Enter BASSANIO and SHYLOCK.

Shy. Three thousand ducats; well.

Bass. Ay, sir, for three months.

Shy. For three months; well.

Bass. For the which, as I told you, Antonio shall be bound.

Shy. Antonio shall become bound; well.

Bass. May you stead me? will you pleasure me? shall I know your answer?

Shy. Three thousand ducats for three months, and Antonio bound.

Bass. Your answer to that.

Shy. Antonio is a good man.

Bass. Have you heard any imputation to the contrary?

Shy. Ho, no, no, no, no: my meaning, in saying he is a good man, is to have you understand me, that he is sufficient. Yet his means are in supposition: he hath an argosy bound to Tripolis, another to the Indies; I understand, moreover, upon the Rialto, he hath a third at Mexico, a fourth for England, and other ventures he hath squandered* abroad. But ships are but boards, sailors but men: there be land-rats and water-rats, land-thieves and water-thieves, I mean pirates; and then there is the peril of waters, winds, and rocks. The man is, notwithstanding, sufficient. Three thousand ducats; I think I may take his bond.

Bass. Be assured you may.

Shy. I will be assured I may; and, that I may be assured, I will bethink me. May I speak with Antonio?

Bass. If it please you to dine with us.

Shy. Yes, to smell pork; to eat of the habitation which your prophet the Nazarite conjured the devil into. I will buy with you, sell with you, talk with you, walk with you, and so following; but I will not eat with you, drink with you, nor pray with you. What news on the Rialto?¹ Who is he comes here?

Bass. This is Signior Antonio. [Exit.

Shy. How like a fawning publican he looks!
I hate him for he is a Christian;
But more for that in low simplicity
He lends out money gratis and brings down
The rate of usance* here with us in Venice.

¹ The Rialto, one of the islands upon which Venice is built, gave its name first to the Exchange which was built upon it, and then to the bridge by which it was reached. It may mean here either of the former; but probably the second of them.--WHITE.

If I can catch him once upon the hip,
I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him.
He hates our sacred nation ; and he rails,
Even there where merchants most do congregate,
On me, my bargains, and my well-won thrift,
Which he calls interest. Cursed be my tribe,
If I forgive him !

Re-enter BASSANIO with ANTONIO.

Bass. [After a short pause] Shylock, do you hear ?

Shy. I am debating of my present store ;
And, by the near guess of my memory,
I cannot instantly raise up the gross
Of full three thousand ducats. What of that ?
Tubal, a wealthy Hebrew of my tribe,
Will furnish me. But soft ! how many months
Do you desire ? [To *Ant.*] Rest you fair, good signior ;
Your worship was the last man in our mouths.

Ant. Shylock, although I neither lend nor borrow,
By taking nor by giving of excess,
Yet, to supply the ripe wants of my friend,
I'll break a custom. Is he yet possess'd*
How much ye would ?

Shy. Ay, ay, three thousand ducats.

Ant. And for three months.

Shy. I had forgot ; three months, you told me so.
Well then, your bond ; and let me see ; but hear you ;
Methought you said you neither lend nor borrow
Upon advantage.

Ant. I do never use it.

Shy. When Jacob grazed his uncle Laban's sheep,—
This Jacob from our holy Abram was,
As his wise mother wrought in his behalf,
The third possessor ; ay, he was the third,—

Ant. And what of him ? did he take interest ?

Shy. No, not take interest ; not, as you would say,
Directly interest : mark what Jacob did.
When Laban and himself were compromised
That all the eanlings* which were streak'd and pied
Should fall as Jacob's hire ;
The skilful shepherd peel'd me certain wands,
And, in the doing of the deed of kind,*
He stuck them up before the fulsome* ewes,
Who, then conceiving, did in eaning time
Fall* parti-colour'd lambs, and those were Jacob's.
This was a way to thrive, and he was blest :
And thrift is blessing, if men steal it not.

Ant. This was a venture, sir, that Jacob served for ;
A thing not in his power to bring to pass,
But sway'd and fashion'd by the hand of heaven.
Was this inserted to make interest good ?
Or is your gold and silver ewes and rams ?

Shy. I cannot tell ; I make it breed as fast :
But note me, signior.

Ant. Mark you this, Bassanio,
The devil can cite Scripture for his purpose.
An evil soul, producing holy witness,
Is like a villain with a smiling cheek ;
A goodly apple rotten at the heart :
O, what a goodly outside falsehood hath !

Shy. Three thousand ducats ; 'tis a good round sum.
Three months from twelve ; then, let me see ; the rate—

Ant. Well, Shylock, shall we be beholding to you ?

Shy. Signior Antonio, many a time and oft
In the Rialto you have rated* me
About my moneys and my usances :*
Still have I borne it with a patient shrug ;
For sufferance is the badge of all our tribe.
You call me misbeliever, cut-throat, dog,
And spit upon my Jewish gaberdine,

And all for use of that which is mine own.
 Well then, it now appears you need my help :
 Go to, then ; you come to me, and you say
 ‘ Shylock, we would have moneys :’ you say so ;
 You, that did void your rheum upon my beard,
 And foot me as you spurn a stranger cur
 Over your threshold : moneys is your suit.
 What should I say to you ? Should I not say
 ‘ Hath a dog money ? is it possible
 A cur can lend three thousand ducats ’ ? or
 Shall I bend low and in a bondman’s key,
 With bated breath and whispering humbleness,
 Say this,—
 ‘ Fair sir, you spit on me on Wednesday last ;
 You spurn’d me such a day ; another time
 You call’d me dog ; and for these courtesies
 I’ll lend you thus much moneys ’ ?

Ant. I am as like to call thee so again,
 To spit on thee again, to spurn thee too.
 If thou wilt lend this money, lend it not
 As to thy friends ; for when did friendship take
 A breed * for barren metal of his friend ?
 But lend it rather to thine enemy ;
 Who if he break, thou mayst with better face
 Exa&t the penalty.

Shy. Why, look you, how you storm !
 I would be friends with you, and have your love,
 Forget the shames that you have stain’d me with,
 Supply your present wants, and take no doit
 Of usance for my moneys, and you’ll not hear me:
 This is kind I offer.

Bass. This were kindness.

Shy. This kindness will I show.
 Go with me to a notary, seal me there
 Your single bond ; and, in a merry sport,

If you repay me not on on such a day,
In such a place, such sum or sums as are
Express'd in the condition, let the forfeit
Be nominated for an equal pound
Of your fair flesh, to be cut off and taken
In what part of your body pleaseth me.

Ant. Content, i' faith : I'll seal to such a bond,
And say there is much kindness in the Jew.

Bass. You shall not seal to such a bond for me :
I'll rather dwell in my necessity.

Ant. Why, fear not, man ; I will not forfeit it :
Within these two months, that's a month before
This bond expires, I do expect return
Of thrice three times the value of this bond.

Shy. O father Abram, what these Christians are,
Whose own hard dealings teaches them suspect
The thoughts of others ! Pray you, tell me this ;
If he should break his day, what should I gain
By the exaction of the forfeiture ?
A pound of man's flesh taken from a man
Is not so estimable, profitable neither,
As flesh of muttons, beefs, or goats. I say,
To buy his favour I extend this friendship :
If he will take it, so ; if not, adieu ;
And, for my love, I pray you wrong me not.

Ant. Yes, Shylock, I will seal unto this bond.

Shy. Then meet me forthwith at the notary's ;
Give him direction for this merry bond ;
And I will go and purse the ducats straight ;
See to my house, left in the fearful guard¹
Of an unthrifty knave ; and presently
I will be with you.

[*Going.*

Ant. Hie thee, gentle Jew.

¹ A guard that is the cause of fear, because not to be trusted. 'Fearful' was anciently often used for *exciting fear*, and is not yet quite obsolete.—VERPLANCK.

The Hebrew will turn Christian : he grows kind.

Bass. I like not fair terms and a villain's mind.

Ant. Come on : in this there can be no dismay ;
My ships come home a month before the day. [Exeunt.

ACT II.

SCENE I. Venice. Before Shylock's house.

Enter LAUNCELOT.

Laun. Certainly my conscience will serve me to run from this Jew my master. The fiend is at mine elbow, and tempts me, saying to me, 'Gobbo, Launcelot Gobbo, good Launcelot,' or 'good Gobbo,' or 'good Launcelot Gobbo, use your legs, take the start, run away.' My conscience says, 'No ; take heed, honest Launcelot ; take heed, honest Gobbo,' or, as aforesaid, 'honest Launcelot Gobbo ; do not run ; scorn running with thy heels.' Well, the most courageous fiend bids me pack : 'Via !' says the fiend ; 'away !' says the fiend ; 'for the heavens, rouse up a brave mind,' says the fiend, 'and run.' Well, my conscience, hanging about the neck of my heart, says very wisely to me, 'My honest friend Launcelot, being an honest man's son,'—or rather an honest woman's son ;—for, indeed, my father did something smack, something grow to, he had a kind of taste ;—well, my conscience says, 'Launcelot, budge not.' 'Budge,' says the fiend. 'Budge not,' says my conscience. 'Conscience,' say I, 'you counsel well.' 'Fiend,' say I, 'you counsel well :' to be ruled by my conscience, I should stay with the Jew my master, who, God bless the mark, is a kind of devil ; and, to run away from the Jew, I should be ruled by the fiend, who, saving your reverence, is the devil himself. Certainly the Jew is the very devil incarnal ; and, in my conscience, my conscience is but a kind of hard conscience, to offer to counsel me to stay with the Jew. The fiend gives the more friendly counsel : I will run, fiend ; my heels are at your command ; I will run.

Enter Old GOBBO,¹ with a basket.

Gob. Master young man, you, I pray you, which is the way to master Jew's?

Laun. [*Aside*] O heavens, this is my true-begotten father! who, being more than sand-blind, high-gravel blind,² knows me not: I will try confusions with him.

Gob. Master young gentleman, I pray you, which is the way to master Jew's?

Laun. Turn up on your right hand at the next turning, but, at the next turning of all, on your left; marry, at the very next turning, turn of no hand, but turn down indirectly to the Jew's house.

Gob. 'Twill be a hard way to hit. Can you tell me whether one Launcelot, that dwells with him, dwell with him or no?

Laun. Talk you of young Master Launcelot? [*Aside*] Mark me now; now will I raise the waters. Talk you of young Master Launcelot?

Gob. No master, sir, but a poor man's son: his father, though I say it, is an honest exceeding poor man, and, God be thanked, well to live.

Laun. Well, let his father be what a' will, we talk of young Master Launcelot.

Gob. Your worship's friend, and Launcelot, sir.

Laun. But I pray you, ergo, old man, ergo, I beseech you, talk you of young Master Launcelot.

Gob. Of Launcelot, an't please your mastership.³

¹ It may be inferred from the name of Gobbo, that Shakespeare designed the character to be represented with a hump-back.—STEEVENS.

² 'Gravel-blind,' a coinage of Launcelot's, is the exaggeration of *sand-blind*.

³ Launcelot whimsically takes his father to task for disrespect to himself—Launcelot, and says, in reply to old Gobbo's statement of their condition in life, 'Well, let his father be what he will, we talk of young Master Launcelot.' The father, still unable to dub his son 'Master,' replies deprecatingly, 'Your worship's friend, and Launcelot,' *i. e.*, 'Aye, we speak of your worship's friend, who is Launcelot.' To this, Launcelot, who evidently, like the Grave-digger in *Hamlet*, understands, after a fashion, the Latin

Laun. Ergo, Master Launcelot. Talk not of Master Launcelot, father; for the young gentleman, according to Fates and Destinies and such odd sayings, the Sisters Three and such branches of learning, is indeed deceased; or, as you would say in plain terms, gone to heaven.

Gob. Marry, God forbid! the boy was the very staff of my age, my very prop.

Laun. Do I look like a cudgel or a hovel-post, a staff or a prop? Do you know me, father?

Gob. Alack the day, I know you not, young gentleman: but, I pray you, tell me, is my boy, God rest his soul, alive or dead?

Laun. Do you not know me, father?¹

Gob. Alack, sir, I am sand-blind; I know you not.

Laun. Nay, indeed, if you had your eyes, you might fail of the knowing me: it is a wise father that knows his own child. Well, old man, I will tell you news of your son: give me your blessing: truth will come to light; murder cannot be hid long; a man's son may; but, at the length, truth will out.

Gob. Pray you, sir, stand up: I am sure you are not Launcelot, my boy.

Laun. Pray you, let's have no more fooling about it, but give me your blessing: I am Launcelot, your boy that was, your son that is, your child that shall be.

Gob. I cannot think you are my son.

Laun. I know not what I shall think of that: but I am Launcelot, the Jew's man; and I am sure Margery your wife is my mother.

Gob. Her name is Margery, indeed: I'll be sworn, if thou be Launcelot, thou art mine own flesh and blood. Lord worshipped might he be! what a beard hast thou got! thou hast got

word he uses, rejoins, 'But I pray you, ergo, old man, ergo, I beseech you, talk you of young Master Launcelot,' *i. e.*, 'And therefore, because I am "your worship" and he is my friend, you should speak of him as Master Launcelot.'—WHITE.

¹ Twice Launcelot calls Gobbo father, and yet the old man does not even suspect with whom he is talking; the reason of which is the ancient custom, almost universal among the peasantry, of calling all old people father or mother.—WHITE.

more hair on thy chin than Dobbin my fill-horse* has on his tail.

Laun. It should seem, then, that Dobbin's tail grows backward: I am sure he had more hair of his tail than I have of my face when I last saw him.

Gob. Lord, how art thou changed! How dost thou and thy master agree? I have brought him a present. How 'gree you now?

Laun. Well, well: but, for mine own part, as I have set up my rest to run away, so I will not rest till I have run some ground. My master's a very Jew: give him a present! give him a halter: I am famished in his service; you may tell every finger I have with my ribs. Father, I am glad you are come: give me your present to one Master Bassanio, who, indeed, gives rare new liveries: if I serve not him, I will run as far as God has any ground.¹ O rare fortune! here comes the man: to him, father; for I am a Jew, if I serve the Jew any longer.

Enter BASSANIO, with LEONARDO and other followers.

Bass. You may do so; but let it be so hasted, that supper be ready at the farthest by five of the clock. See these letters delivered; put the liveries to making; and desire Gratiano to come anon to my lodging. *[Exit a Servant.]*

Laun. To him, father.

Gob. God bless your worship!

Bass. Gramercy!* wouldst thou aught with me?

Gob. Here's my son, sir, a poor boy,—

Laun. Not a poor boy, sir, but the rich Jew's man; that would, sir,—as my father shall specify,—

Gob. He hath a great infection, sir, as one would say, to serve,—

Laun. Indeed, the short and the long is, I serve the Jew, and have a desire,—as my father shall specify,—

¹ To understand the appropriateness of these words, we must remember that in Venice it was not easy to find ground enough to run upon.

Gob. His master and he, saving your worship's reverence, are scarce cater-cousins,—

Laun. To be brief, the very truth is that the Jew, having done me wrong, doth cause me,—as my father, being, I hope, an old man, shall frutify unto you,—

Gob. I have here a dish of doves that I would bestow upon your worship, and my suit is,—

Laun. In very brief, the suit is impertinent¹ to myself, as your worship shall know by this honest old man; and, though I say it, though old man, yet poor man, my father.

Bass. One speak for both. What would you?

Laun. Serve you, sir.

Gob. That is the very defect of the matter, sir.

Bass. I know thee well; thou hast obtain'd thy suit: Shylock thy master spoke with me this day, And hath preferr'd thee, if it be preferment To leave a rich Jew's service, to become The follower of so poor a gentleman.

Laun. The old proverb is very well parted between my master Shylock and you, sir: you have the grace of God, sir, and he hath enough.²

Bass. Thou speak'st it well. Go, father, with thy son. Take leave of thy old master and inquire My lodging out. Give him a livery More guarded* than his fellows': see it done.

Laun. Father, in. I cannot get a service, no; I have ne'er a tongue in my head. Well, if any man in Italy have a fairer table³ which doth offer to swear upon a book,⁴ I shall have good

¹ Launcelot means to say pertinent.

² It is uncertain what proverb is here alluded to. White says, 'from the text it would seem to have been, "He who hath God's grace hath enough."'—EDITOR.

³ 'Table,' in the language of fortune-tellers, is the palm of the hand.

⁴ The construction is, 'Well, if any man in Italy which doth offer to swear upon a book have a fairer table,'—the expression being of that pleonastic form (for 'any man') which is common among the uncultivated, as 'any man that breathes,' 'any man that walks on shoe leather,' &c., &c. After having thus admired the fairness of his 'table' Launcelot breaks off to predict his good fortune.—WHITE.

fortune. Go to, here's a simple line of life : here's a small trifle of wives : alas, fifteen wives is nothing ! a'leven widows and nine maids is a simple coming-in for one man : and then to 'scape drowning thrice, and to be in peril of my life with the edge of a feather-bed ;¹ here are simple scapes. Well, if Fortune be a woman, she's a good wench for this gear.* Father, come ; I'll take my leave of the Jew in the twinkling of an eye.

[*Exeunt Launcelot and Old Gobbo.*]

Bass. I pray thee, good Leonardo, think on this :
These things being bought and orderly bestow'd,
Return in haste, for I do feast to-night
My best-esteem'd acquaintance : hie thee, go.

Leon. My best endeavours shall be done herein.

[*Exeunt all but Leonardo.*]

Enter GRATIANO.

Gra. Where is your master ?

Leon. Yonder, sir, he walks. [*Exit.*]

Gra. Signior Bassanio,—

Re-enter BASSANIO.

Bass. Gratiano !

Gra. I have a suit to you.

Bass. You have obtain'd it.

Gra. You must not deny me : I must go with you to Belmont.

Bass. Why, then you must. But hear thee, Gratiano :

Thou art too wild, too rude, and bold of voice ;
Parts that become thee happily enough,
And in such eyes as ours appear not faults ;
But where thou art not known, why, there they show
Something too liberal.* Pray thee, take pain
To allay with some cold drops of modesty
Thy skipping spirit ; lest, through thy wild behaviour,
I be misconstrued in the place I go to,
And lose my hopes.

¹ A cant phrase to signify the danger of marrying.

Gra. Signior Bassanio, hear me :
 If I do not put on a sober habit,
 Talk with respect, and swear but now and then,
 Wear prayer-books in my pocket, look demurely ;
 Nay more, while grace is saying, hood mine eyes
 Thus with my hat,¹ and sigh, and say ‘amen ;’
 Use all the observance of civility,
 Like one well studied in a sad ostent *
 To please his grandam, never trust me more.

Bass. Well, we shall see your bearing.

Gra. Nay, but I bar to-night : you shall not gauge me
 By what we do to-night.

Bass. No, that were pity :
 I would entreat you rather to put on
 Your boldest suit of mirth, for we have friends
 That purpose merriment. But fare you well :
 I have some business.

Gra. And I must to Lorenzo and the rest :
 But we will visit you at supper-time.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter JESSICA and LAUNCELOT.

Jes. I am sorry thou wilt leave my father so :
 Our house is hell ; and thou, a merry devil,
 Didst rob it of some taste of tediousness.
 But fare thee well ; there is a ducat for thee :
 And, Launcelot, soon at supper shalt thou see
 Lorenzo, who is thy new master’s guest :
 Give him this letter ; do it secretly ;
 And so farewell : I would not have my father
 See me in talk with thee.

Laun. Adieu ! tears exhibit my tongue. Most beautiful pagan,
 most sweet Jew ! if a Christian did not play the knave, and get *
 thee, I am much deceived. But, adieu : these foolish drops do
 something drown my manly spirit : adieu.

¹ It was formerly the custom to wear the hat at meals.

Jes. Farewell, good Launcelot. [*Exit Launcelot.*
Alack, what heinous sin is it in me
To be ashamed to be my father's child !
But though I am a daughter to his blood,
I am not to his manners. O Lorenzo,
If thou keep promise, I shall end this strife,
Become a Christian, and thy loving wife. [*Exit.*

SCENE II. *The same. A street.*

Enter GRATIANO, LORENZO, SALARINO, and SALANIO.

Lor. Nay, we will slink away in supper-time,
Disguise us at my lodging, and return
All in an hour.

Gra. We have not made good preparation.

Salar. We have not spoke us yet of torch-bearers.

Salan. 'Tis vile, unless it may be quaintly order'd,
And better in my mind not undertook.

Lor. 'Tis now but four o'clock: we have two hours
To furnish us.

Enter LAUNCELOT, with a letter.

Friend Launcelot, what's the news ?

Laun. An it shall please you to break up this, it shall seem
to signify.

Lor. I know the hand: in faith, 'tis a fair hand;
And whiter than the paper it writ on
Is the fair hand that writ.

Gra. Love-news, in faith.

Laun. By your leave, sir.

Lor. Whither goest thou ?

Laun. Marry, sir, to bid my old master the Jew to sup to-
night with my new master the Christian.

Lor. Hold here, take this: tell gentle Jessica
I will not fail her; speak it privately. [*Exit Launcelot.*

Go, gentlemen,
Will you prepare you for this masque to-night ?
I am provided of a torch-bearer.

Salar. Ay, marry, I'll be gone about it straight.

Salan. And so will I.

Lor. Meet me and Gratiano
At Gratiano's lodging some hour hence.

Salar. 'Tis good we do so. [*Exeunt Salarino and Salanio.*]

Gra. Was not that letter from fair Jessica ?

Lor. I must needs tell thee all. She hath directed
How I shall take her from her father's house ;
What gold and jewels she is furnish'd with ;
What page's suit she hath in readiness.
If e'er the Jew her father come to heaven,
It will be for his gentle daughter's sake :
And never dare misfortune cross her foot,
Unless she do it under this excuse,
That she is issue to a faithless Jew.
Come, go with me ; peruse this as thou goest :
Fair Jessica shall be my torch-bearer.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. *The same. Before Shylock's house.*

Enter SHYLOCK and LAUNCELOT.

Shy. Well, thou shalt see, thy eyes shall be thy judge,
The difference of old Shylock and Bassanio :—
What, Jessica !—thou shalt not gormandise,
As thou hast done with me :—What, Jessica !—
And sleep and snore, and rend apparel out ;—
Why, Jessica, I say !

Laun. Why, Jessica !

Shy. Who bids thee call ? I do not bid thee call.

Laun. Your worship was wont to tell me I could do nothing
without bidding.

Enter JESSICA.

Jes. Call you? what is your will?

Shy. I am bid forth to supper, Jessica:

There are my keys. But wherefore should I go?

I am not bid for love; they flatter me:

But yet I'll go in hate, to feed upon

The prodigal Christian. Jessica, my girl,

Look to my house. I am right loath to go:

There is some ill a-brewing towards my rest,

For I did dream of money-bags to-night.

Laun. I beseech you, sir, go: your young master doth expect your reproach.

Shy. So do I his.

Laun. And they have conspired together, I will not say you shall see a masque; but if you do, then it was not for nothing that my nose fell a-bleeding on Black-Monday¹ last at six o'clock i' the morning, falling out that year on Ash-Wednesday was four year, in the afternoon.

Shy. What, are there masques? Hear you me, Jessica:

Lock up my doors; and when you hear the drum,

And the vile squealing of the wry-neck'd fife,²

Clamber not you up to the casements then,

Nor thrust your head into the public street

To gaze on Christian fools with varnish'd faces;

But stop my house's ears, I mean my casements:

Let not the sound of shallow foppery enter

My sober house. By Jacob's staff, I swear

I have no mind of feasting forth to-night:

¹ Bleeding at the nose was formerly thought to be ominous. Stow, the Chronicler, says Black Monday got its name from the following occurrence: On April 14th, 1360 (Easter Monday), Edward III., 'with his host, lay before the city of Paris: which day was full dark of mist and hail, and so bitter cold, that many men died on their horses backs with the cold.'—EDITOR.

² The fife does not mean the instrument, but the person who played on it. So in Barnaby Rich's Aphorisms at the end of his Irish Hubbub, 1618 'A fife is a wry-neckt musitian, for he always looks away from his instrument.'—BOSWELL.

But I will go. Go you before me, sirrah ;
Say I will come.

Laun. I will go before, sir. Mistress, look out at window, for all this ;

There will come a Christian by,
Will be worth a Jewes eye.¹ [Exit.

Shy. What says that fool of Hagar's offspring, ha ?

Jes. His words were, 'Farewell, mistress ;' nothing else.

Shy. The patch* is kind enough, but a huge feeder ;
Snail-slow in profit, and he sleeps by day
More than the wild-cat : drones hive not with me ;
Therefore I part with him ; and part with him
To one that I would have him help to waste
His borrow'd purse. Well, Jessica, go in :
Perhaps I will return immediately :
Do as I bid you ; shut doors after you :
Fast bind, fast find.

A proverb never stale in thrifty mind. [Exit.

Jes. Farewell ; and if my fortune be not crost,
I have a father, you a daughter, lost. [Exit.

Enter GRATIANO and SALARINO, masqued.

Gra. This is the pent-house under which Lorenzo
Desired us to make stand.

Salar. His hour is almost past.

Gra. And it is marvel he out-dwells his hour,
For lovers ever run before the clock.

Salar. O, ten times faster Venus' pigeons fly
To seal love's bonds new-made, than they are wont
To keep obliged faith unforfeited !

Gra. That ever holds : who riseth from a feast
With that keen appetite that he sits down ?

¹ The term Jew was anciently applied to Hebrews of both sexes. The old Saxon genitive form is here used for the sake of rhythm. White says, this is an allusion to the 'enormous sums extorted by the *Front-de-bœufs* of old from Jews, as ransom for their eyes.'---EDITOR.

Where is the horse that doth untread again
His tedious measures with the unbated fire
That he did pace them first? All things that are,
Are with more spirit chased than enjoy'd.
How like a younker or a prodigal
The scarfed bark puts from her native bay,
Hugg'd and embraced by the strumpet wind!
How like the prodigal doth she return,
With over-weather'd ribs and ragged sails,
Lean, rent, and beggar'd by the strumpet wind!

Salar. Here comes Lorenzo: more of this hereafter.

Enter LORENZO.

Lor. Sweet friends, your patience for my long abode;
Not I, but my affairs, have made you wait:
When you shall please to play the thieves for wives,
I'll watch as long for you then. Approach;
Here dwells my father Jew. Ho! who's within?

Enter JESSICA, to the window, in boy's clothes.

Jes. Who are you? Tell me, for more certainty,
Albeit I'll swear that I do know your tongue.

Lor. Lorenzo, and thy love.

Jes. Lorenzo, certain; and my love, indeed,
For who love I so much? And now who knows
But you, Lorenzo, whether I am yours?

Lor. Heaven and thy thoughts are witness that thou art.

Jes. Here, catch this casket; it is worth the pains.
I am glad 'tis night, you do not look on me,
For I am much ashamed of my exchange:
But love is blind, and lovers cannot see
The pretty follies that themselves commit;
For if they could, Cupid himself would blush
To see me thus transformed to a boy.

Lor. Descend, for you must be my torch-bearer.

Jes. What, must I hold a candle to my shames?
 They in themselves, good sooth, are too too light.
 Why, 'tis an office of discovery, love;
 And I should be obscured.

Lor. So are you, sweet,
 Even in the lovely garnish of a boy.
 But come at once;
 For the close night doth play the runaway
 And we are stay'd for at Bassanio's feast.

Jes. I will make fast the doors, and gild myself
 With some more ducats, and be with you straight.

[*Exit, from the window.*]

Gra. Now, by my hood,¹ a Gentile, and no Jew.²

Lor. Beshrew me but I love her heartily;
 For she is wise, if I can judge of her;
 And fair she is, if that mine eyes be true;
 And true she is, as she hath proved herself;
 And therefore, like herself, wise, fair, and true,
 Shall she be placed in my constant soul.

Enter JESSICA.

What, art thou come? On, gentlemen; away!
 Our masquing mates by this time for us stay.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV. *Belmont. A room in Portia's house.*

*Flourish of cornets. Enter the PRINCE OF MOROCCO and his train;
 PORTIA, NERISSA, and others attending.*

Mor. Mislike me not for my complexion,
 The shadow'd livery of the burnish'd sun,
 To whom I am a neighbour and near bred.

¹ 'By my hood'—by my self, *i. e.*, by my estate—manhood, kinghood, knighthood, or whatever the hood or estate of the protester might be.

² A jest arising from the ambiguity of 'Gentile,' which signifies both a heathen and one well born.

Bring me the fairest creature northward born,
Where Phœbus' fire scarce thaws the icicles,
And let us make incision for your love,
To prove whose blood is reddest,¹ his or mine.
I tell thee, lady, this aspect of mine
Hath fear'd the valiant : by my love, I swear
The best-regarded virgins of our clime
Have loved it too : I would not change this hue,
Except to steal your thoughts, my gentle queen.

Por. In terms of choice I am not solely led
By nice direction of a maiden's eyes ;
Besides, the lottery of my destiny
Bars me the right of voluntary choosing :
But if my father had not scanted me
And hedged me by his wit,* to yield myself
His wife who wins me by that means I told you,
Yourself, renowned prince, then stood as fair
As any comer I have look'd on yet
For my affection.

Mor. Even for that I thank you :
Therefore, I pray you, lead me to the caskets,
To try my fortune. By this scimitar
That slew the Sophy¹ and a Persian prince
That won three fields of Sultan Solyman,
I would outstare the sternest eyes that look,
Outbrave the heart most daring on the earth,
Pluck the young sucking cubs from the she-bear,
Yea, mock the lion when he roars for prey,
To win thee, lady. But, alas the while !
If Hercules and Lichas play at dice
Which is the better man, the greater throw

¹ Red blood was of old considered a mark both of high birth and courage.

² 'Sophy' is strictly neither a title nor a name. The emperors or shahs of Persia of one dynasty were called Sophy, or more properly 'Sufi,' as the emperors of Rome were called 'Cæsars. —WHITE.

May turn by fortune from the weaker hand :
So is Alcides beaten by his page ;
And so may I, blind fortune leading me,
Miss that which one unworthier may attain,
And die with grieving.

Por. You must take your chance ;
And either not attempt to choose at all,
Or swear before you choose, if you choose wrong,
Never to speak to lady afterward
In way of marriage : therefore be advised.*

Mor. Nor will not. Come, bring me unto my chance.

Por. First, forward to the temple : after dinner
Your hazard shall be made.

Mor. Good fortune then !
To make me blest or curs'd'st among men.

[*Cornets, and exeunt.*]

SCENE V. *The same. Another room.*

*Flourish of cornets. PORTIA and NERISSA, with the PRINCE
OF MOROCCO, and their attendants, discovered.*

Por. Go draw aside the curtains, and discover
The several caskets to this noble prince.
Now make your choice.

Mor. The first, of gold, who this inscription bears,
'Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire ;'
The second, silver, which this promise carries,
'Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves ;'
The third, dull lead, with warning all as blunt,
'Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath.'
How shall I know if I do choose the right ?

Por. The one of them contains my picture, prince :
If you choose that, then I am yours withal.

Mor. Some god direct my judgement ! Let me see ;
I will survey the inscription back again.

What says this leaden casket ?

‘ Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath.’

Must give,—for what ? for lead ? hazard for lead ?

This casket threatens. Men that hazard all

Do it in hope of fair advantages :

A golden mind stoops not to shows of dross ;

I’ll then nor give nor hazard aught for lead.

What says the silver with her virgin hue ?

‘ Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.’

As much as he deserves ! Pause there, Morocco,

And weigh thy value with an even hand :

If thou be’st rated by thy estimation,

Thou dost deserve enough ; and yet enough

May not extend so far as to the lady.

What if I stray’d no further, but chose here ?

Let’s see once more this saying graved in gold ;

‘ Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire.’

Why, that’s the lady ; all the world desires her ;

From the four corners of the earth they come,

To kiss this shrine, this mortal-breathing saint :

The Hyrcanian deserts and the vasty wilds

Of wide Arabia are as throughfares now

For princes to come view fair Portia :

The watery kingdom, whose ambitious head

Spits in the face of heaven, is no bar

To stop the foreign spirits ; but they come,

As o’er a brook, to see fair Portia.

One of these three contains her heavenly picture.

Never so rich a gem was set in worse than gold !

Deliver me the key :

Here do I choose, and thrive I as I may !

Por. There, take it, prince ; and if my form lie there,

Then I am yours. [*He unlocks the golden casket*]

Mor. O hell ! what have we here ?

A carrion Death, within whose empty eye

There is a written scroll ! I'll read the writing.

[*Reads.*] 'All that glisters is not gold ;
Often have you heard that told :
Many a man his life hath sold
But my outside to behold :
Gilded tombs do worms infold.
Had you been as wise as bold,
Young in limbs, in judgement old,
Your answer had not been inscroll'd :
Fare you well ; your suit is cold.'

Cold, indeed ; and labour lost :

Then, farewell, heat, and welcome, frost !

Portia, adieu. I have too grieved a heart

To take a tedious leave : thus losers part.

[*Exit with his train. Flourish of cornets.*]

Por. A gentle riddance. Draw the curtains, go.

Let all of his complexion choose me so.

Enter BALTHASAR.

Bal. Where is my lady ?

Por. Here : what would my lord ?

Bal. Madam, there is alighted at your gate

A young Venetian, one that comes before

To signify the approaching of his lord ;

From whom he bringeth sensible regreets,*

To wit, besides commends and courteous breath,

Gifts of rich value. Yet I have not seen

So likely an ambassador of love :

A day in April never came so sweet,

To show how costly summer was at hand,

As this fore-spurrer comes before his lord.

Por. No more, I pray thee : I am half afeard

Thou wilt say anon he is some kin to thee,

Thou spend'st such high-day wit in praising him.

Come, come, Nerissa ; for I long to see

Quick Cupid's post that comes so mannerly.

Ner. Bassanio, lord Love, if thy will it be !

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI. *Venice. A street.*

Enter SALARINO and SALANIO.

Salar. Why, man, I saw Bassanio under sail :
With him is Gratiano gone along ;
And in their ship I am sure Lorenzo is not.

Salan. The villain Jew with outcries raised the Duke,
Who went with him to search Bassanio's ship.

Salar. He came too late, the ship was under sail :
But there the Duke was given to understand
That in a gondola were seen together
Lorenzo and his amorous Jessica :
Besides, Antonio certified the Duke
They were not with Bassanio in his ship.

Salan. I never heard a passion so confused,
So strange, outrageous, and so variable,
As the dog Jew did utter in the streets :
' My daughter ! O my ducats ! O my daughter !
Fled with a Christian ! O my Christian ducats !
Justice ! the law ! my ducats, and my daughter !
A sealed bag, two sealed bags of ducats,
Of double ducats, stolen from me by my daughter !'

Salar. Why, all the boys in Venice follow him,
Crying, his daughter, and his ducats.

Salan. Let good Antonio look he keep his day,
Or he shall pay for this.

Salar. Marry, well remember'd.
I reason'd * with a Frenchman yesterday,
Who told me, in the narrow seas that part
The French and English, there miscarried
A vessel of our country richly fraught : *
I thought upon Antonio when he told me ;

And wish'd in silence that it were not his.

Salan. You were best to tell Antonio what you hear ;
Yet do not suddenly, for it may grieve him.

Salar. A kinder gentleman treads not the earth.
I saw Bassanio and Antonio part :
Bassanio told him he would make some speed
Of his return : he answer'd, 'Do not so ;
Slubber* not business for my sake, Bassanio,
But stay the very riping of the time ;
And for the Jew's bond which he hath of me,
Let it not enter in your mind of love :
Be merry ; and employ your chiefest thoughts
To courtship, and such fair ostents* of love
As shall conveniently become you there :'
And even there, his eye being big with tears,
Turning his face, he put his hand behind him,
And, with affection wondrous sensible
He wrung Bassanio's hand ; and so they parted.

Salan. I think he only loves the world for him.
I pray thee, let us go and find him out,
And quicken his embraced heaviness
With some delight or other.

Salar.

Do we so.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII. *The same. Another street.*

Enter SALANIO and SALARINO.

Salan. Now, what news on the Rialto ?

Salar. Why, yet it lives there unchecked, that Antonio hath a
ship of rich lading wrecked on the narrow seas ; the Goodwins, I
think they call the place ; a very dangerous flat and fatal, where
the carcasses of many a tall ship lie buried, as they say, if my gossip
Report be an honest woman of her word.

Salan. I would she were as lying a gossip in that as ever
knapped* ginger, or made her neighbours believe she wept for the

death of a third husband. But it is true, without any slips of prolixity, or crossing the plain highway of talk, that the good Antonio, the honest Antonio,——O that I had a title good enough to keep his name company!—

Salar. Come, the full stop.

Salan. Ha! what sayest thou? Why, the end is, he hath lost a ship.

Salar. I would it might prove the end of his losses.

Salan. Let me say 'amen' betimes; lest the devil cross my prayer, for here he comes in the likeness of a Jew.

Enter SHYLOCK.

How now, Shylock! what news among the merchants?

Shy. You knew, none so well, none so well as you, of my daughter's flight.

Salar. That's certain: I, for my part, knew the tailor that made the wings she flew withal.

Salan. And Shylock, for his own part, knew the bird was fledged; and then it is the complexion of them all to leave the dam.

Shy. She is damned for it.

Salar. That's certain, if the devil may be her judge.

Shy. My own flesh and blood to rebel!

Salar. But tell us, do you hear whether Antonio have had any loss at sea or no?

Shy. There I have another bad match: a bankrupt, a prodigal, who dare scarce show his head on the Rialto; a beggar, that used to come so smug upon the mart; let him look to his bond: he was wont to call me usurer; let him look to his bond: he was wont to lend money for a Christian courtesy; let him look to his bond.

Salar. Why, I am sure, if he forfeit, thou wilt not take his flesh: what's that good for?

Shy. To bait fish withal: if it will feed nothing else, it will feed my revenge. He hath disgraced me, and hindered me half a million; laughed at my losses, mocked at my gains,

scorned my nation, thwarted my bargains, cooled my friends, heated mine enemies ; and what's his reason ? I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes ? hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions ? fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is ? If you prick us, do we not bleed ? if you tickle us, do we not laugh ? if you poison us, do we not die ? and if you wrong us, shall we not revenge ? if we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that. If a Jew wrong a Christian, what is his humility ? Revenge. If a Christian wrong a Jew, what should his sufferance be by Christian example ? Why, revenge. The villany you teach me, I will execute ; and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction.

Salan. Here comes another of the tribe : a third cannot be matched, unless the devil himself turn Jew.

[*Exeunt Salanio and Salarino.*]

Enter TUBAL.

Shy. How now, Tubal ! what news from Genoa ? hast thou found my daughter ?

Tub. I often came where I did hear of her, but cannot find her.

Shy. Why, there, there, there, there ! a diamond gone, cost me two thousand ducats in Frankfort ! The curse never fell upon our nation till now ; I never felt it till now : two thousand ducats in that ; and other precious, precious jewels. I would my daughter were dead at my foot, and the jewels in her ear ! would she were hearsed at my foot, and the ducats in her coffin ! No news of them ? Why, so :—and I know not what's spent in the search : why, thou loss upon loss ! the thief gone with so much, and so much to find the thief ; and no satisfaction, no revenge : nor no ill luck stirring but what lights on my shoulders ; no sighs but of my breathing ; no tears but of my shedding.

Tub. Yes, other men have ill luck too : Antonio, as I heard in Genoa,—

Shy. What, what, what? ill luck, ill luck?

Tub. Hath an argosy cast away, coming from Tripolis.

Shy. I thank God, I thank God! Is't true? is't true?

Tub. I spoke with some of the sailors that escaped the wreck.

Shy. I thank thee, good Tubal: good news, good news! ha, ha! where? in Genoa?

Tub. Your daughter spent in Genoa, a I heard, in one night fourscore ducats.

Shy. Thou stickest a dagger in me: I shall never see my gold again: fourscore ducats at a sitting! fourscore ducats.

Tub. There came divers of Antonio's creditors in my company to Venice, that swear he cannot choose but break.

Shy. I am very glad of it: I'll plague him; I'll torture him: I am glad of it.

Tub. One of them showed me a ring that he had of your daughter for a monkey.

Shy. Out upon her! Thou torturest me, Tubal: it was my turquoise;¹ I had it of Leah when I was a bachelor: I would not have given it for a wilderness of monkeys.

Tub. But Antonio is certainly undone.

Shy. Nay, that's true, that's very true: Go, Tubal, fee me an officer; bespeak him a fortnight before. I will have the heart of him, if he forfeit; for, were he out of Venice, I can make what merchandise I will. Go, go, Tubal, and meet me at our synagogue; go, good Tubal; at our synagogue, Tubal. [*Exeunt.*]

¹ The turquoise is, in itself, a jewel of no very great value. Shylock treasured it as a maiden gift from his dead wife, Leah. Steevens mentions many superstitious qualities imputed to this stone.—EDITOR.

ACT III.

SCENE I. *Belmont. A room in Portia's house.*

BASSANIO, PORTIA, GRATIANO, NERISSA, and Attendants, *discovered.*

Por. I pray you, tarry : pause a day or two,
Before you hazard ; for, in choosing wrong,
I lose your company : therefore forbear awhile.

Bass. Let me choose ;
For as I am, I live upon the rack.

Por. Upon the rack, Bassanio ! then confess
What treason there is mingled with your love.

Bass. None but that ugly treason of mistrust,
Which makes me fear the enjoying of my love :
There may as well be amity and life
'Tween snow and fire, as treason and my love.
But let me to my fortune and the caskets.

Por. Away then ! I am lock'd in one of them :
If you do love me, you will find me out.
Nerissa and the rest, stand all aloof.
Let music sound while he doth make his choice ;
Then, if he lose, he makes a swan-like end,
Fading in music :¹ that the comparison
May stand more proper, my eye shall be the stream,
And watery death-bed for him. Now he goes,
With no less presence,* but with much more love,
Than young Alcides, when he did redeem
The virgin tribute paid by howling Troy
To the sea-monster : I stand for sacrifice ;
The rest aloof are the Dardanian wives,

¹ Alluding to the opinion which long prevailed, that the swan uttered a plaintive musical sound at the approach of death.

With bleared visages, come forth to view
 The issue of the exploit. Go, Hercules!
 Live thou, I live : with much much more dismay
 I view the fight, than thou that makest the fray.¹

[*Music, whilst Bassanio comments on the caskets to himself*

Bass. So may the outward shows be least themselves :²

The world is still deceived with ornament.
 In law, what plea so tainted and corrupt,
 But, being seasoned with a gracious* voice,
 Obscures the show of evil? In religion,
 What damned error, but some sober brow
 Will bless it, and approve it with a text,
 Hiding the grossness with fair ornament?
 There is no vice so simple, but assumes
 Some mark of virtue on his outward parts :
 Thus ornament is but the guiled* shore
 To a most dangerous sea ; the beauteous scarf
 Veiling an Indian beauty ; in a word,
 The seeming truth which cunning times put on
 To entrap the wisest. Therefore, thou gaudy gold,
 Hard food for Midas, I will none of thee ;
 Nor none of thee, thou pale and common drudge
 'Tween man and man : but thou, thou meagre lead,
 Which rather threatenest than dost promise aught,
 Thy paleness moves me more than eloquence ;
 And here choose I : joy be the consequence !

Por. [*Aside*] How all the other passions fleet to air,

¹ Laomedon, the founder of Troy, hired Neptune to build the walls, and Apollo, meantime, to keep his flocks on Mount Ida. The gods having finished their tasks, Laomedon refuses their wages. Neptune, enraged, sends a sea-monster to ravage the country about Troy. The Trojans, by command of an oracle, sacrifice from time to time a maiden to the monster, to appease him and his offended master. Among others, Hesione, daughter of Laomedon, is selected by lot for this purpose. But at this time Hercules, or Alcides (the patronymic), returning from his expedition against the Amazons, slays the monster and rescues the maiden. Such is the myth to which the poet alludes.—EDITOR.

² Bassanio has made up his mind while the music has proceeded, and then follows out the course of his thoughts in words.

As doubtful thoughts, and rash-embraced despair,
And shuddering fear, and green-eyed jealousy !
O love, be moderate ; allay thy ecstasy ;
In measure rain thy joy ; scant this excess !
I feel too much thy blessing : make it less,
For fear I surfeit !

Bass. What find I here ? [*Opening the leaden casket.*
Fair Portia's counterfeit !* Here's the scroll,
The continent and summary of my fortune.

[*Reads.*] ' You that choose not by the view,
Chance as fair, and choose as true !
Since this fortune falls to you,
Be content and seek no new.
If you be well pleased with this,
And hold your fortune for your bliss,
Turn you where your lady is,
And claim her with a loving kiss.'

A gentle scroll. Fair lady, by your leave ;
I come by note, to give and to receive.
Like one of two contending in a prize,
That thinks he hath done well in people's eyes,
Hearing applause and universal shout,
Giddy in spirit, still gazing in a doubt
Whether those peals of praise be his or no ;
So, thrice-fair lady, stand I, even so ;
As doubtful whether what I see be true,
Until confirm'd, sign'd, ratified by you.

Por. You see me, Lord Bassanio, where I stand,
Such as I am : though for myself alone
I would not be ambitious in my wish,
To wish myself much better ; yet, for you
I would be trebled twenty times myself ;
A thousand times more fair, ten thousand times
More rich ;
That only to stand high in your account,

I might in virtues, beauties, livings, friends,
Exceed account. But now I was the lord
Of this fair mansion, master of my servants,
Queen o'er myself; and even now, but now,
This house, these servants, and this same myself,
Are yours, my lord: I give them with this ring;
Which when you part from, lose, or give away,
Let it presage the ruin of your love,
And be my vantage to exclaim on you.

Bass. Madam, you have bereft me of all words,
Only my blood speaks to you in my veins;
But when this ring
Parts from this finger, then parts life from hence:
O, then be bold to say Bassanio's dead!

Ner. My lord and lady, it is now our time,
That have stood by and seen our wishes prosper,
To cry, good joy: good joy, my lord and lady!

Gra. My Lord Bassanio and my gentle lady,
I wish you all the joy that you can wish;
For I am sure you can wish none from me:
And when your honours mean to solemnize
The bargain of your faith, I do beseech you,
Even at that time I may be married too.

Bass. With all my heart, so thou canst get a wife.

Gra. I thank your lordship, you have got me one.
My eyes, my lord, can look as swift as yours:
You saw the mistress, I beheld the maid;¹
You loved, I loved for intermission.
No more pertains to me, my lord, than you.
Your fortune stood upon the casket there,

¹ Nerissa was no servant-maid, according to modern notions, but an attendant friend, as well born and bred, perhaps, though not as wealthy, as Portia herself. Such a relation was common of old. It existed between Gratiano and Bassanio, whose intercourse is that of equals, and the former of whom is evidently a gentleman in every sense of the word. Bassanio says to him and Nerissa, 'Our feast shall be *much honour'd* in your marriage.'—WHITE.

And so did mine too, as the matter falls ;
For wooing here until I sweat again,
And swearing till my very roof was dry
With oaths of love, at last, if promise last,
I got a promise of this fair one here
To have her love, provided that your fortune
Achieved her mistress.

Por. Is this true, Nerissa ?

Ner. Madam, it is, so you stand pleased withal.

Bass. And do you, Gratiano, mean good faith ?

Gra. Yes, faith, my lord.

Bass. Our feast shall be much honour'd in your marriage.

Gra. But who comes here ? Lorenzo and his infidel ?
What, and my old Venetian friend Salerio ?

Enter LORENZO, JESSICA, and SALERIO, a Messenger from Venice.

Bass. Lorenzo and Salerio, welcome hither ;
If that the youth of my new interest here
Have power to bid you welcome. By your leave,
I bid my very friends and countrymen,
Sweet Portia, welcome.

Por. So do I, my lord :
They are entirely welcome.

Lor. I thank your honour. For my part, my lord,
My purpose was not to have seen you here ;
But meeting with Salerio by the way,
He did entreat me, past all saying nay,
To come with him along.

Saler. I did, my lord,
And I have reason for it. Signior Antonio
Commends him to you. [*Gives Bassanio a letter.*]

Bass. Ere I ope his letter,
I pray you, tell me how my good friend doth.

Saler. Not sick, my lord, unless it be in mind ;
Nor well, unless in mind : his letter there

Will show you his estate.

Gra. Nerissa, cheer yon stranger ; bid her welcome.

Your hand, Salerio : what's the news from Venice ?

How doth that royal merchant, good Antonio ?

I know, he will be glad of our success ;

We are the Jasons, we have won the fleece.

Saler. I would you had won the fleece that he hath lost.

Por. There are some shrewd* contents in yon same paper,

That steals the colour from Bassanio's cheek :

Some dear friend dead ; else nothing in the world

Could turn so much the constitution

Of any constant man. What, worse and worse !

With leave, Bassanio ; I am half yourself,

And I must freely have the half of any thing

That this same paper brings you.

Bass. O sweet Portia,

Here are a few of the unpleasant'st words

That ever blotted paper ! Gentle lady,

When I did first impart my love to you,

I freely told you, all the wealth I had

Ran in my veins, I was a gentleman ;

And then I told you true : and yet, dear lady,

Rating myself at nothing, you shall see

How much I was a braggart. When I told you

My state was nothing, I should then have told you

That I was worse than nothing ; for, indeed,

I have engaged myself to a dear friend,

Engaged my friend to his mere enemy,

To feed my means. Here is a letter, lady ;

The paper as the body of my friend,

And every word in it a gaping wound,

Issuing life-blood. But is it true, Salerio ?

Have all his ventures fail'd ? What, not one hit ?

From Tripolis, from Mexico, and England,

From Lisbon, Barbary, and India ?

And not one vessel scape the dreadful touch
Of merchant-marring rocks?

Saler.

Not one, my lord.

Besides, it should appear, that if he had
The present money to discharge the Jew,
He would not take it. Never did I know
A creature, that did bear the shape of man,
So keen and greedy to confound a man:
He plies the Duke at morning and at night;
And doth impeach the freedom of the state,
If they deny him justice: twenty merchants,
The Duke himself, and the magnificoes
Of greatest port, have all persuaded with him;
But none can drive him from the envious plea
Of forfeiture, of justice, and his bond.

Por. Is it your dear friend that is thus in trouble?

Bass. The dearest friend to me, the kindest man,
The best-condition'd and unwearied spirit
In doing courtesies; and one in whom
The ancient Roman honour more appears
Than any that draws breath in Italy.

Por. What sum owes he the Jew?

Bass. For me three thousand ducats.

Por.

What, no more?

Pay him six thousand, and deface the bond;
Double six thousand, and then treble that,
Before a friend of this description
Shall lose a hair through Bassanio's fault.
First go with me to church and call me wife,
And then away to Venice to your friend;
For never shall you lie by Portia's side
With an unquiet soul. You shall have gold
To pay the petty debt twenty times over:
When it is paid, bring your true friend along.
My maid Nerissa and myself meantime
Will live as maids and widows. Come, away!

For you shall hence upon your wedding-day :
Bid your friends welcome, show a merry cheer :
Since you are dear bought, I will love you dear.
But let me hear the letter of your friend.

Bass. [*Reads*] ‘Sweet Bassanio, my ships have all miscarried, my creditors grow cruel, my estate is very low, my bond to the Jew is forfeit ; and since in paying it, it is impossible I should live, all debts are cleared between you and I, if I might but see you at my death.¹ Notwithstanding, use your pleasure: if your love do not persuade you to come, let not my letter.’

Por. O love, despatch all business, and be gone !

Bass. Since I have your good leave to go away ;

I will make haste: but, till I come again,

No bed shall e’er be guilty of my stay,

No rest be interposer ’twixt us twain.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *The same. A garden.*

Enter LAUNCELOT and JESSICA.

Laun. Yes, truly ; for, look you, the sins of the father are to be laid upon the children : therefore, I promise ye, I fear you. I was always plain with you, and so now I speak my agitation of the matter : therefore be of good cheer ; for, truly, I think you are damned. There is but one hope in it that can do any good ; and that is but a kind of bastard hope neither.

Jes. And what hope is that, I pray thee ?

¹ Mr. Charles Kemble, as stated by Harness, objects to the common punctuation of this passage. He would have a period after ‘you and I,’ and make the following clause, ‘if I might but see you at my death,’ an independent sentence. The reason given for the proposed change is, that the present punctuation implies a want of generosity on Antonio’s part, in seeming to make his seeing Bassanio a condition of his forgiving him his debt. The passage, however, ‘If I might but see you,’ &c., does not appear to be added as a positive condition of pardon, but as an after-thought, in a vein of mournful pleasantry and graceful compliment. If this passage were made an independent sentence, expressive of an earnest wish to see Bassanio, it might be taken as a covert way of stimulating Bassanio to the payment of the debt, and thus the exquisite tenderness and dignity of the whole letter would be much impaired.—EDITOR.

Laun. Marry, you may partly hope that you are not the Jew's daughter.

Jes. So the sins of my mother should be visited upon me.

Laun. Truly then I fear you are damned both by father and mother: thus when I shun Scylla, your father, I fall into Charybdis,¹ your mother: well, you are gone both ways.

Jes. I shall be saved by my husband; he hath made me a Christian.

Laun. Truly, the more to blame he: we were Christians enough before; e'en as many as could well live, one by another. This making of Christians will raise the price of hogs: if we grow all to be pork-eaters, we shall not shortly have a rasher on the coals for money.

Enter LORENZO.

Jes. I'll tell my husband, Launcelot, what you say: here he comes.

Lor. I shall grow jealous of you shortly, Launcelot, if you thus get my wife into corners.

Jes. Nay, you need not fear us, Lorenzo: Launcelot and I are out. He tells me flatly, there is no mercy for me in heaven, because I am a Jew's daughter: and he says, you are no good member of the commonwealth; for, in converting Jews to Christians, you raise the price of pork.

Lor. I shall answer that to the commonwealth. Go in, sirrah; bid them prepare for dinner.

Laun. That is done, sir; they have all stomachs.

Lor. Goodly Lord, what a wit-snapper are you! then bid them prepare dinner.

Laun. That is done too, sir; only 'cover'* is the word.

Lor. Will you cover then, sir?

Laun. Not so, sir, neither; I know my duty.

¹ 'Scylla'—'Charybdis.' It is hardly necessary to say that these names were applied by the ancients to the rocky shores of the strait that separates Sicily from Italy, the passage of which was greatly dreaded by mariners.—EDITOR.

Lor. Yet more quarrelling with occasion! Wilt thou show the whole wealth of thy wit in an instant? I pray thee, understand a plain man in his plain meaning: go to thy fellows; bid them cover the table, serve in the meat, and we will come in to dinner.

Laun. For the table, sir, it shall be served in; for the meat, sir, it shall be covered; for your coming to dinner, sir, why, let it be as humours and conceits shall govern. [*Exit.*]

Lor. O dear discretion, how his words are suited!
The fool hath planted in his memory
An army of good words; and I do know
A many fools, that stand in better place,
Garnish'd like him, that for a tricky word
Defy the matter. How cheer'st thou, Jessica?
And now, good sweet, say thy opinion,
How dost thou like the Lord Bassanio's wife?

Jes. Past all expressing. It is very meet
The Lord Bassanio live an upright life;
For, having such a blessing in his lady,
He finds the joys of heaven here on earth;
And if on earth he do not mean it, then
In reason he should never come to heaven.
Why, if two gods should play some heavenly match
And on the wager lay two earthly women,
And Portia one, there must be something else
Pawn'd with the other; for the poor rude world
Hath not her fellow.

Lor. Even such a husband
Hast thou of me as she is for a wife.

Jes. Nay, but ask my opinion too of that.

Lor. I will anon: first, let us go to dinner.

Jes. Nay, let me praise you while I have a stomach.

Lor. No, pray thee, let it serve for table-talk;
Then, howsoe'er thou speak'st, 'mong other things
I shall digest it.

Jes. Well, I'll set you forth. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. *The same. A room in Portia's house.*

Enter PORTIA, NERISSA, LORENZO, JESSICA, and BALTHASAR.

Lor. Madam, although I speak it in-your presence,
You have a noble and a true conceit
Of god-like amity; which appears most strongly
In bearing thus the absence of your lord.
But if you knew to whom you show this honour,
How true a gentleman you send relief,
How dear a lover of my lord your husband,
I know you would be prouder of the work
Than customary bounty can enforce you.

Por. I never did repent for doing good,
Nor shall not now.
This comes too near the praising of myself;
Therefore no more of it; hear other things.
Lorenzo, I commit into your hands
The husbandry * and manage of my house
Until my lord's return: for mine own part,
I have toward heaven breathed a secret vow
To live in prayer and contemplation,
Only attended by Nerissa here,
Until her husband and my lord's return:
There is a monastery two miles off;
And there we will abide. I do desire you
Not to deny this imposition;
The which my love and some necessity
Now lays upon you.

Lor. Madam, with all my heart;
I shall obey you in all fair commands.

Por. My people do already know my mind,
And will acknowledge you and Jessica

In place of Lord Bassanio and myself.
And so farewell, till we shall meet again.

Lor. Fair thoughts and happy hours attend on you !

Jes. I wish your ladyship all heart's content.

Por. I thank you for your wish, and am well pleased
To wish it back on you : fare you well, Jessica.

[*Exeunt Jessica and Lorenzo.*]

Now, Balthasar,
As I have ever found thee honest-true,
So let me find thee still. Take this same letter,
And use thou all the endeavour of a man
In speed to Padua : see thou render this
Into my cousin's hand, Doctor Bellario ;
And, look, what notes and garments he doth give thee,
Bring them, I pray thee, with imagined speed
Unto the tranect,* to the common ferry
Which trades to Venice. Waste no time in words,
But get thee gone : I shall be there before thee.

Balth. Madam, I go with all convenient speed.

[*Exit.*]

Por. Come on, Nerissa ; I have work in hand
That you yet know not of : we'll see our husbands
Before they think of us.

Ner. Shall they see us ?

Por. They shall, Nerissa ; but in such a habit,
That they shall think we are accomplished
With that we lack. I'll hold thee any wager,
When we are both accoutred like young men,
I'll prove the prettier fellow of the two,
And wear my dagger with the braver grace,
And speak between the change of man and boy
With a reed voice, and turn two mincing steps
Into a manly stride, and speak of frays
Like a fine bragging youth ; and tell quaint lies,
How honourable ladies sought my love,
Which I denying, they fell sick and died ;

I could not do withal :¹ then I'll repent,
 And wish, for all that, that I had not kill'd them ;
 And twenty of these puny lies I'll tell,
 That men shall swear I have discontinued school
 Above a twelvemonth. I have within my mind
 A thousand raw tricks of these bragging Jacks,
 Which I will practise.

Ner.

Why, shall we turn to men ?

Por. Fie, what a question's that,
 If thou wert near a lewd interpreter !
 But come : I'll tell thee all my whole device
 When I am in my coach, which stays for us
 At the park-gate ; and therefore haste away,
 For we must measure twenty miles to-day

[*Excunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *Venice. A court of justice.*

*The DUKE, the Magnificoes, ANTONIO, BASSANIO, GRATIANO,
 SALARINO, SALANIO, SALERIO, and others discovered.*

Duke. What, is Antonio here ?

Ant. Ready, so please your Grace.

Duke. I am sorry for thee : thou art come to answer
 A stony adversary, an inhuman wretch
 Uncapable of pity, void and empty
 From any dram of mercy.

Ant. I have heard
 Your Grace hath ta'en great pains to qualify
 His rigorous course ; but since he stands obdurate,
 And that no lawful means can carry me
 Out of his envy's* reach, I do oppose

¹ That is, I could not help it.

My patience to his fury ; and am arm'd
To suffer, with a quietness of spirit,
The very tyranny and rage of his.

Duke. Go one, and call the Jew into the court.

Saler. He is ready at the door : he comes, my lord.

Duke. Make room, and let him stand before our face.

Enter SHYLOCK.

Shylock, the world thinks, and I think so too,
That thou but lead'st this fashion of thy malice
To the last hour of act ; and then 'tis thought
Thou'lt show thy mercy and remorse* more strange
Than is thy strange apparent cruelty ;
And where thou now exact'st the penalty,
Which is a pound of this poor merchant's flesh,
Thou wilt not only loose the forfeiture,
But, touch'd with human gentleness and love,
Forgive a moiety of the principal ;
Glancing an eye of pity on his losses,
That have of late so huddled on his back,
Enough to press a royal merchant down,
And pluck commiseration of his state
From brassy bosoms and rough hearts of flint,
From stubborn Turks and Tartars, never train'd
To offices of tender courtesy.
We all expect a gentle answer, Jew.

Shy. I have possess'd your Grace of what I purpose ;
And by our holy Sabbath have I sworn
To have the due and forfeit of my bond :
If you deny it, let the danger light
Upon your charter and your city's freedom.
You'll ask me, why I rather choose to have
A weight of carrion-flesh than to receive
Three thousand ducats : I'll not answer that :
But, say, it is my humour : is it answer'd ?

What if my house be troubled with a rat,
And I be pleased to give ten thousand ducats
To have it baned? What, are you answer'd yet?
Some men there are love not a gaping pig;¹
Some, that are mad if they behold a cat.
Now, for your answer:

As there is no firm reason to be render'd,
Why he cannot abide a gaping pig;
Why he, a harmless necessary cat;
So can I give no reason, nor I will not,
More than a lodged hate and a certain loathing
I bear Antonio, that I follow thus
A losing suit against him. Are you answer'd?

Bass. This is no answer, thou unfeeling man,
To excuse the current of thy cruelty.

Shy. I am not bound to please thee with my answers.

Bass. Do all men kill the things they do not love?

Shy. Hates any man the thing he would not kill?

Bass. Every offence is not a hate at first.

Shy. What, wouldst thou have a serpent sting thee twice?

Ant. I pray you, think you question with the Jew:
You may as well go stand upon the beach,
And bid the main flood bate his usual height;
You may as well use question with the wolf,
Why he hath made the ewe bleat for the lamb;
You may as well forbid the mountain pines
To wag their high tops, and to make no noise,
When they are fretten with the gusts of heaven;
You may as well do any thing most hard,
As seek to soften that—than which what's harder?—
His Jewish heart: therefore, I do beseech you,
Make no more offers, use no farther means,
But with all brief and plain conveniency

¹ By a 'gaping pig,' Shakespeare, I believe, meant a pig prepared for the table. So in Fletcher's *Elder Brother*—'And they stand gaping like a roasted pig.'—MALONE.

Let me have judgement and the Jew his will.

Bass. For thy three thousand ducats here is six.

Shy. If every ducat in six thousand ducats
Were in six parts and every part a ducat,
I would not draw them ; I would have my bond.

Duke. How shalt thou hope for mercy, rendering none ?

Shy. What judgement shall I dread, doing no wrong ?
You have among you many a purchased slave,
Which, like your asses and your dogs and mules,
You use in abject and in slavish parts,
Because you bought them : shall I say to you,
Let them be free, marry them to your heirs ?
Why sweat they under burthens ? let their beds
Be made as soft as yours, and let their palates
Be season'd with such viands ? You will answer
'The slaves are ours : ' so do I answer you :
The pound of flesh, which I demand of him,
Is dearly bought ; 'tis mine and I will have it.
If you deny me, fie upon your law !
There is no force in the decrees of Venice.

I stand for judgement : answer ; shall I have it ?

Duke. Upon my power I may dismiss this court,
Unless Bellario, a learned doctor,
Whom I have sent for to determine this,
Come here to-day.

Saler. My lord, here stays without
A messenger with letters from the doctor,
New come from Padua.¹

Duke. Bring us the letters ; call the messenger.

[*Exit an Attendant.*]

Bass. Good cheer, Antonio ! What, man, courage yet !
The Jew shall have my flesh, blood, bones, and all,
Ere thou shalt lose for me one drop of blood.

¹ Padua is the place of education for the civil law in Italy.

Ant. I am a tainted wether of the flock,
Meetest for death : the weakest kind of fruit
Drops earliest to the ground ; and so let me :
You cannot better be employ'd, Bassanio,
Than to live still, and write mine epitaph.

Re-enter Attendant, with NERISSA, dressed like a lawyer's clerk.

Duke. Came you from Padua, from Bellario ?

Ner. From both, my lord. Bellario greets your Grace.

[*Presenting a letter.*]

Bass. Why dost thou whet thy knife so earnestly ?

Shy. To cut the forfeiture from that bankrupt there.

Gra. Not on thy sole, but on thy soul, harsh Jew,
Thou makest thy knife keen ;¹ but no metal can,
No, not the hangman's axe, bear half the keenness
Of thy sharp envy. Can no prayers pierce thee ?

Shy. No, none that thou hast wit enough to make.

Gra. O, be thou damn'd, execrable dog !
And for thy life let justice be accused.
Thou almost makest me waver in my faith,
To hold opinion with Pythagoras,
That souls of animals infuse themselves
Into the trunks of men : thy currish spirit
Govern'd a wolf, who, hanged for human slaughter,
Even from the gallows did his fell soul fleet,
And, whilst thou lay'st in thy unhallow'd dam,
Infused itself in thee ; for thy desires
Are wolvisish, bloody, starved and ravenous.

Shy. Till thou canst rail the seal from off my bond,
Thou but offend'st thy lungs to speak so loud :
Repair thy wit, good youth, or it will fall
To cureless ruin. I stand here for law.

Duke. This letter from Bellario doth commend

¹ The conceit is that Shylock's soul was so hard that it had given an edge to his knife.

A young and learned doctor to our court.
Where is he?

Ner. He attendeth here hard by,
To know your answer, whether you'll admit him.

Duke. With all my heart. Some three or four of you
Go give him courteous conduct to this place.

[*Exeunt Salarino, Salanio, and Salerio.*]

Meantime the court shall hear Bellario's letter.

Clerk. [*Reads*] 'Your Grace shall understand that at the receipt of your letter I am very sick: but in the instant that your messenger came, in loving visitation was with me a young doctor of Rome; his name is Balthasar. I acquainted him with the cause in controversy between the Jew and Antonio the merchant: we turned o'er many books together: he is furnished with my opinion; which, bettered with his own learning,—the greatness whereof I cannot enough commend,—comes with him, at my importunity, to fill up your Grace's request in my stead. I beseech you, let his lack of years be no impediment to let him lack a reverend estimation; for I never knew so young a body with so old a head. I leave him to your gracious acceptance, whose trial shall better publish his commendation.'

Duke. You hear the learn'd Bellario, what he writes:
And here, I take it, is the doctor come.

Re-enter SALARINO, SALANIO, and SALERIO, with PORTIA,
dressed like a doctor of laws.

Give me your hand. Come you from old Bellario?

Por. I did, my lord.

Duke. You are welcome: take your place.
Are you acquainted with the difference
That holds this present question in the court?

Por. I am informed throughly of the cause.
Which is the merchant here, and which the Jew?

Duke. Antonio and old Shylock, both stand forth.

Por. Is your name Shylock?

Shy.

Shylock is my name.

Por. Of a strange nature is the suit you follow ;
Yet in such rule that the Venetian law
Cannot impugn * you as you do proceed.
You stand within his danger,* do you not ?

Ant. Ay, so he says.

Por. Do you confess the bond ?

Ant. I do.

Por. Then must the Jew be merciful.

Shy. On what compulsion must I ? tell me that.

Por. The quality of mercy is not strain'd,
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath : it is twice blest ;
It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes :
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest : it becomes
The throned monarch better than his crown ;
His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
The attribute to awe and majesty,
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings ;
But mercy is above this sceptred sway ;
It is enthroned in the hearts of kings,
It is an attribute to God himself ;
And earthly power doth then show likest God's
When mercy seasons justice. Therefore, Jew,
Though justice be thy plea, consider this,
That, in the course of justice, none of us
Should see salvation : we do pray for mercy ;
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render
The deeds of mercy. I have spoke thus much
To mitigate the justice of thy plea ;
Which if thou follow, this strict court of Venice
Must needs give sentence 'gainst the merchant there.

Shy. My deeds upon my head ! I crave the law,
The penalty and forfeit of my bond.

Por. Is he not able to discharge the money ?

Bass. Yes, here I tender it for him in the court ;
Yea, twice the sum : if that will not suffice,
I will be bound to pay it ten times o'er,
On forfeit of my hands, my head, my heart :
If this will not suffice, it must appear
That malice bears down truth.* And I beseech you,
Wrest once the law to your authority :
To do a great right, do a little wrong,
And curb this cruel devil of his will.

Por. It must not be ; there is no power in Venice
Can alter a decree established :
'Twill be recorded for a precedent,
And many an error, by the same example,
Will rush into the state : it cannot be.

Shy. A Daniel come to judgement ! yea, a Daniel !
O wise young judge, how I do honour thee !

Por. I pray you, let me look upon the bond.

Shy. Here 'tis, most reverend doctor, here it is.

Por. Shylock, there's thrice thy money offer'd thee.

Shy. An oath, an oath, I have an oath in heaven :
Shall I lay perjury upon my soul ?
No, not for Venice.

Por. Why, this bond is forfeit ;
And lawfully by this the Jew may claim
A pound of flesh, to be by him cut off
Nearest the merchant's heart. Be merciful :
Take thrice thy money ; bid me tear the bond ;

Shy. When it is paid according to the tenour.
It doth appear you are a worthy judge ;
You know the law, your exposition
Hath been most sound : I charge you by the law,
Whereof you are a well-deserving pillar,
Proceed to judgement : by my soul I swear
There is no power in the tongue of man
To alter me : I stay here on my bond.

Ant. Most heartily I do beseech the court
To give the judgement.

Por. Why then, thus it is :
You must prepare your bosom for his knife.

Shy. O noble judge ! O excellent young man !

Por. For the intent and purpose of the law
Hath full relation to the penalty,
Which here appeareth due upon the bond.

Shy. 'Tis very true : O wise and upright judge !
How much more elder art thou than thy looks !

Por. Therefore lay bare your bosom.

Shy. Ay, his breast :
So says the bond :—doth it not, noble judge ?—
'Nearest his heart :' those are the very words.

Por. It is so. Are there balance here to weigh
The flesh ?

Shy. I have them ready.

Por. Have by some surgeon, Shylock, on your charge,
To stop his wounds, lest he do bleed to death.

Shy. Is it so nominated in the bond ?

Por. It is not so express'd : but what of that ?
'Twere good you do so much for charity.

Shy. I cannot find it ; 'tis not in the bond.

Por. You, merchant, have you any thing to say ?

Ant. But little : I am arm'd and well prepared.
Give me your hand, Bassanio : fare you well !
Grieve not that I am fallen to this for you ;
For herein Fortune shows herself more kind
Than is her custom : it is still her use
To let the wretched man outlive his wealth,
To view with hollow eye and wrinkled brow
An age of poverty ; from which lingering penance
Of such misery doth she cut me off.
Commend me to your honourable wife :
Tell her the process of Antonio's end ;

Say how I loved you, speak me fair in death ;
And, when the tale is told, bid her be judge
Whether Bassanio had not once a love.
Repent but you that you shall lose your friend ,
And he repents not that he pays your debt ;
For if the Jew do cut but deep enough,
I'll pay it presently with all my heart.

Bass. Antonio, I am married to a wife
Which is as dear to me as life itself ;
But life itself, my wife, and all the world,
Are not with me esteem'd above thy life :
I would lose all, ay, sacrifice them all
Here to this devil, to deliver you.

Gra. I have a wife, whom, I protest, I love :
I would she were in heaven, so she could
Entreat some power to change this currish Jew.

Shy. These be the Christian husbands. I have a daughter ;
Would any of the stock of Barrabas
Had been her husband rather than a Christian !
We trifle time : I pray thee, pursue sentence.

Por. A pound of that same merchant's flesh is thine :
The court awards it, and the law doth give it.

Shy. Most rightful judge !

Por. And you must cut this flesh from off his breast :
The law allows it, and the court awards it.

Shy. Most learned judge ! A sentence ! Come, prepare !

Por. Tarry a little ; there is something else.
This bond doth give thee here no jot of blood ;
The words expressly are 'a pound of flesh :'
Take then thy bond, take thou thy pound of flesh ;
But, in the cutting it, if thou dost shed
One drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods
Are, by the laws of Venice, confiscate
Unto the state of Venice.

Gra. O upright judge ! Mark, Jew : O learned judge !

Shy. Is that the law ?

Por. Thyself shall see the act :
For, as thou urgest justice, be assured
Thou shalt have justice, more than thou desirest.

Gra. O learned judge ! Mark, Jew : a learned judge !

Shy. I take this offer, then ; pay the bond thrice,
And let the Christian go.

Bass. Here is the money.

Por. Soft !
The Jew shall have all justice ; soft ! no haste :
He shall have nothing but the penalty.

Gra. O Jew ! an upright judge, a learned judge !

Por. Therefore prepare thee to cut off the flesh.
Shed thou no blood ; nor cut thou less nor more
But just a pound of flesh : if thou cut'st more
Or less than a just pound, be it but so much
As makes it light or heavy in the substance,
Or the division of the twentieth part
Of one poor scruple, nay, if the scale do turn
But in the estimation of a hair,
Thou diest and all thy goods are confiscate.

Gra. A second Daniel, a Daniel, Jew !
Now, infidel, I have you on the hip.

Por. Why doth the Jew pause ? take thy forfeiture.

Shy. Give me my principal, and let me go.

Bass. I have it ready for thee ; here it is.

Por. He hath refused it in the open court :
He shall have merely justice and his bond.

Gra. A Daniel, still say I, a second Daniel !
I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word.

Shy. Shall I not have barely my principal ?

Por. Thou shalt have nothing but the forfeiture,
To be so taken at thy peril, Jew.

Shy. Why, then the devil give him good of it !
I'll stay no longer question.

Por. Tarry, Jew :

The law hath yet another hold on you.
It is enacted in the laws of Venice,
If it be proved against an alien
That by direct or indirect attempts
He seek the life of any citizen,
The party 'gainst the which he doth contrive
Shall seize one half his goods ; the other half
Comes to the privy coffer of the state ;
And the offender's life lies in the mercy
Of the Duke only, 'gainst all other voice.
In which predicament, I say, thou stand'st ;
For it appears, by manifest proceeding,
That indirectly, and directly too,
Thou hast contrived against the very life
Of the defendant ; and thou hast incurr'd
The danger formerly by me rehearsed.
Down, therefore, and beg mercy of the Duke.

Gra. Beg that thou mayst have leave to hang thyself :
And yet, thy wealth being forfeit to the state,
Thou hast not left the value of a cord ;
Therefore thou must be hang'd at the state's charge.

Duke. That thou shalt see the difference of our spirits,
I pardon thee thy life before thou ask it :
For half thy wealth, it is Antonio's ;
The other half comes to the general state,
Which humbleness may drive into a fine.

Por. Ay, for the state, not for Antonio.¹

Shy. Nay, take my life and all ; pardon not that :
You take my house, when you do take the prop
That doth sustain my house ; you take my life,
When you do take the means whereby I live.

Por. What mercy can you render him, Antonio ?

¹ That is, the State's moiety may be commuted to a fine, but not Antonio's.

Gra. A halter gratis ; nothing else, for God's sake.

Ant. So please my lord the Duke and all the court
To quit the fine¹ for one half of his goods,
I am content ; so he will let me have
The other half in use, to render it,
Upon his death, unto the gentleman
That lately stole his daughter :
Two things provided more, that, for this favour,
He presently become a Christian ;
The other, that he do record a gift,
Here in the court, of all he dies possess'd,
Unto his son Lorenzo and his daughter.

Duke. He shall do this, or else I do recant
The pardon that I late pronounced here.

Por. Art thou contented, Jew ? what dost thou say ?

Shy. I am content.

Por. Clerk, draw a deed of gift.

Shy. I pray you, give me leave to go from hence ;
I am not well : send the deed after me,
And I will sign it.

Duke. Get thee gone, but do it.

Gra. In christening shalt thou have two godfathers :
Had I been judge, thou shouldst have had ten more,
To bring thee to the gallows, not the font. [*Exit Shylock.*

Duke. Sir, I entreat you home with me to dinner.

Por. I humbly do desire your Grace of pardon :
I must away this night toward Padua,
And it is meet I presently set forth.

Duke. I am sorry that your leisure serves you not.
Antonio, gratify this gentleman,

¹ Antonio does not mean that he is content to release Shylock from the decree of the state with regard to one half of his goods,—which would be an impertinence not akin to Antonio's character,—but to leave (quit) the fine to the mercy of the state, while he on his side shows mercy by not claiming the fee-simple of the other half, but only its use,—that is, the product derivable from it,—till the Jew's death, rendering it then to his son-in-law and heir, Lorenzo.—EDITOR.

For, in my mind, you are much bound to him.

[*Exeunt Duke and his train.*]

Bass. Most worthy gentleman, I and my friend
Have by your wisdom been this day acquitted
Of grievous penalties ; in lieu whereof,
Three thousand ducats, due unto the Jew,
We freely cope * your courteous pains withal.

Ant. And stand indebted, over and above,
In love and service to you evermore.

Por. He is well paid that is well satisfied ;
And I, delivering you, am satisfied
And therein do account myself well paid.

Bass. Dear sir, of force I must attempt you further :
Take some remembrance of us, as a tribute,
Not as a fee.

Por. You press me far, and therefore I will yield.
Give me your gloves, I'll wear them for your sake ; [To *Ant.*
And, for your love, I'll take this ring from you : [To *Bass.*
Do not draw back your hand ; I'll take no more ;
And you in love shall not deny me this.

Bass. This ring, good sir, alas, it is a trifle !
I will not shame myself to give you this.

Por. I will have nothing else but only this.

Bass. Good sir, this ring was given me by my wife ;
And when she put it on, she made me vow
That I should neither sell nor give nor lose it.

Por. That 'scuse serves many men to save their gifts.
And if your wife be not a mad-woman,
And know how well I have deserved this ring,
She would not hold out enemy for ever,
For giving it to me. Well, peace with you !

[*Portia and Nerissa stand apart.*]

Ant. My Lord Bassanio, let him have the ring :
Let his deservings and my love withal
Be valued 'gainst your wife's commandment.

Bass. Go, Gratiano,
Give him the ring ; and bring him, if thou canst,
Unto Antonio's house. Come, Antonio.

[*Exeunt Antonio and Bassanio.*]

Gra. Fair sir,
My Lord Bassanio upon more advice*
Hath sent you here this ring, and doth entreat
Your company at dinner.

Por. That cannot be :
His ring I do accept most thankfully :
And so, I pray you, tell him : furthermore,
I pray you, show my youth old Shylock's house.

Gra. That will I do.

Ner. Sir, I would speak with you.
I'll see if I can get my husband's ring, [*Aside to Portia.*]
Which I did make him swear to keep for ever.

Por. [*Aside to Ner.*] Thou mayst, I warrant. We shall have
old swearing,
That they did give the rings away to men ;
But we'll outface them, and outswear them too.
[*Aloud*] Away ! make haste : thou know'st where I will tarry.

Ner. Come, good sir, will you show me to this house ? [*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I. *Belmont. Avenue to Portia's house.*

Enter LORENZO and JESSICA.

Lor. The moon shines bright : in such a night as this,
When the sweet wind did gently kiss the trees
And they did make no noise, in such a night
Troilus methinks mounted the Trojan walls,

And sigh'd his soul toward the Grecian tents,
Where Cressid lay that night.

Jes. In such a night
Did Thisbe fearfully o'ertrip the dew,
And saw the lion's shadow ere himself,
And ran dismay'd away.

Lor. In such a night
Stood Dido with a willow in her hand
Upon the wild sea-banks, and waft her love
To come again to Carthage.

Jes. In such a night
Medea gather'd the enchanted herbs
That did renew old Æson.

Lor. In such a night
Did Jessica steal from the wealthy Jew
And with an unthrift love did run from Venice
As far as Belmont.

Jes. In such a night
Did young Lorenzo swear he loved her well,
Stealing her soul with many vows of faith
And ne'er a true one.

Lor. In such a night
Did pretty Jessica, like a little shrew,
Slander her love, and he forgave it her.

Jes. I would out-night you, did no body come ;
But, hark, I hear the footing of a man.

Enter STEPHANO.

Lor. Who comes so fast in silence of the night ?

Steph. A friend.

Lor. A friend ! what friend ? your name, I pray you, friend ?

Steph. Stephano is my name ; and I bring word
My mistress will before the break of day
Be here at Belmont.

Lor. Who comes with her ?

Steph. None but a holy hermit and her maid.

I pray you, is my master yet return'd?

Lor. He is not, nor we have not heard from him.

But go we in, I pray thee, Jessica,

And ceremoniously let us prepare

Some welcome for the mistress of the house.

Laun. [*Within.*] Sola, sola! wo ha, ho! sola, sola!

Lor. Who calls?

Enter LAUNCELOT.

Laun. Sola! did you see Master Lorenzo? Master Lorenzo, sola, sola!

Lor. Leave hollaing, man: here.

Laun. Sola! where? where?

Lor. Here.

Laun. Tell him there's a post come from my master, with his horn full of good news: my master will be here ere morning.

[*Exit.*

Lor. Sweet soul, let's in, and there expect their coming.

And yet no matter: why should we go in?

My friend Stephano, signify, I pray you,

Within the house, your mistress is at hand;

And bring your music forth into the air.

[*Exit Stephano.*

How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!

Here will we sit, and let the sounds of music

Creep in our ears: soft stillness and the night

Become the touches of sweet harmony.

Sit, Jessica. Look how the floor of heaven

Is thick inlaid with patines* of bright gold:

There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st,

But in his motion like an angel sings,

Still quiring* to the young-eyed cherubims;

Such harmony is in immortal souls;

But whilst this muddy vesture of decay

Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.

Enter Musicians.

Come, ho, and wake Diana with a hymn !
With sweetest touches pierce your mistress' ear,
And draw her home with music.

[*Music.*

Jes. I am never merry when I hear sweet music.

Lor. The reason is, your spirits are attentive :
For do but note a wild and wanton herd,
Or race of youthful and unhandled colts,
Fetching mad bounds, bellowing and neighing loud,
Which is the hot condition of their blood ;
If they but hear perchance a trumpet sound,
Or any air of music touch their ears,
You shall perceive them make a mutual stand,
Their savage eyes turn'd to a modest gaze
By the sweet power of music : therefore the poet
Did feign that Orpheus drew trees, stones and floods ;
Since nought so stockish, hard and full of rage,
But music for the time doth change his nature.
The man that hath no music in himself,
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils ;
The motions of his spirit are dull as night,
And his affections dark as Erebus :
Let no such man be trusted. Mark the music.

Enter PORTIA and NERISSA.

Por. That light we see is burning in my hall.
How far that little candle throws his beams !
So shines a good deed in a naughty world.

Ner. When the moon shone, we did not see the candle.

Por. So doth the greater glory dim the less :
A substitute shines brightly as a king,
Until a king be by ; and then his state
Empties itself, as doth an inland brook

Into the main of waters. Music ! hark !

Ner. It is your music, madam, of the house.

Por. Nothing is good, I see, without respect :¹
Methinks it sounds much sweeter than by day.

Ner. Silence bestows that virtue on it, madam.

Por. The crow doth sing as sweetly as the lark,
When neither is attended ; and I think
The nightingale, if she should sing by day,
When every goose is cackling, would be thought
No better a musician than the wren.
How many things by season season'd are
To their right praise and true perfection !
Peace, ho ! the moon sleeps with Endymion,
And would not be awaked.

[*Music ceases.*]

Lor. That is the voice,
Or I am much deceived, of Portia.

Por. He knows me as the blind man knows the cuckoo,
By the bad voice.

Lor. Dear lady, welcome home.

Por. We have been praying for our husbands' healths,
Which speed, we hope, the better for our words.
Are they return'd ?

Lor. Madam, they are not yet ;
But there is come a messenger before,
To signify their coming.

Por. Go in, Nerissa ;
Give order to my servants that they take
No note at all of our being absent hence ;
Nor you, Lorenzo ; Jessica, nor you.

[*A tucket sounds.*]

Lor. Your husband is at hand ; I hear his trumpet :
We are no tell-tales, madam ; fear you not.

Por. This night methinks is but the daylight sick ;
It looks a little paler : 'tis a day,

¹ That is, except by comparison. We still say that one thing is good or bad in respect to another.

Such as the day is when the sun is hid.

Enter BASSANIO, ANTONIO, GRATIANO, and their followers.

Bass. We should hold day with the Antipodes,
If you would walk in absence of the sun.

Por. Let me give light, but let me not be light ;
For a light wife doth make a heavy husband,
And never be Bassanio so for me.
You are welcome home, my lord.

Bass. I thank you, madam. Give welcome to my friend.
This is the man, this is Antonio,
To whom I am so infinitely bound.

Por. You should in all sense be much bound to him,
For, as I hear, he was much bound for you.

Ant. No more than I am well acquitted of.

Por. Sir, you are very welcome to our house :
It must appear in other ways than words,
Therefore I scant this breathing courtesy.

Gra. [*To Nerissa*] By yonder moon I swear you do me wrong ;
In faith, I gave it to the judge's clerk :
Would he were hang'd that had it, for my part,
Since you do take it, love, so much at heart.

Por. A quarrel, ho, already ! what's the matter ?

Gra. About a hoop of gold, a paltry ring
That she did give me, whose posy was
For all the world like cutler's poetry
Upon a knife, ' Love me, and leave me not.'

Ner. What talk you of the posy or the value ?
You swore to me, when I did give it you,
That you would wear it till your hour of death,
And that it should lie with you in your grave :
Though not for me, yet for your vehement oaths,
You should have been respective,* and have kept it.
Gave it a judge's clerk ! no, heaven's my judge,
The clerk will ne'er wear hair on's face that had it.

Gra. He will, an if he live to be a man.

Ner. Ay, if a woman live to be a man.

Gra. Now, by this hand, I gave it to a youth,
A kind of boy, a little scrubbed* boy,
No higher than thyself, the judge's clerk,
A prating boy, that begg'd it as a fee:
I could not for my heart deny it him.

Por. You were to blame, I must be plain with you,
To part so slightly with your wife's first gift;
A thing stuck on with oaths upon your finger
And so riveted with faith unto your flesh.
I gave my love a ring, and made him swear
Never to part with it; and here he stands;
I dare be sworn for him he would not leave it
Nor pluck it from his finger, for the wealth
That the world masters. Now, in faith, Gratiano,
You gave your wife too unkind a cause of grief:
An 'twere to me, I should be mad at it.

Bass. [*Aside*] Why, I were best to cut my left hand off,
And swear I lost the ring defending it.

Gra. My Lord Bassanio gave his ring away
Unto the judge that begg'd it and indeed
Deserved it too; and then the boy, his clerk,
That took some pains in writing, he begg'd mine;
And neither man nor master would take aught
But the two rings.

Por. What ring gave you, my lord?
Not that, I hope, which you received of me.

Bass. If I could add a lie unto a fault,
I would deny it; but you see my finger
Hath not the ring upon it, it is gone.

Por. Even so void is your false heart of truth.
By heaven, I will ne'er come in your sight
Until I see the ring.

Ner. Nor I in yours

Till I again see mine.

Bass. Sweet Portia,
If you did know to whom I gave the ring,
If you did know for whom I gave the ring,
And would conceive for what I gave the ring,
And how unwillingly I left the ring,
When naught would be accepted but the ring,
You would abate the strength of your displeasure.

Por. If you had known the virtue of the ring,
Or half her worthiness that gave the ring,
Or your own honour to contain* the ring,
You would not then have parted with the ring.
What man is there so much unreasonable,
If you had pleased to have defended it
With any terms of zeal, wanted the modesty
To urge the thing held as a ceremony?
Nerissa teaches me what to believe :
I'll die for't but some woman had the ring.

Bass. No, by my honour, madam, by my soul,
No woman had it, but a civil doctor,¹
Which did refuse three thousand ducats of me,
And begg'd the ring ; the which I did deny him,
And suffered him to go displeased away ;
Even he that did uphold the very life
Of my dear friend. What should I say, sweet lady ;
I was enforced to send it after him ;
I was beset with shame and courtesey ;
My honour would not let ingratitude
So much besmear it. Pardon me, good lady ;
For, by these blessed candles of the night,
Had you been there, I think you would have begg'd
The ring of me to give the worthy doctor.

Por. Let not that doctor e'er come near my house :
Since he hath got the jewel that I loved,

¹ That is, a doctor of the civil law.

And that which you did swear to keep for me,
I will become as liberal as you.

Ant. I am the unhappy subject of these quarrels.

Por. Sir, grieve not you ; you are welcome notwithstanding.

Bass. Portia, forgive me this enforced wrong ;
And, in the hearing of these many friends,
I swear to thee, even by thine own fair eyes,
Wherein I see myself,—

Por. Mark you but that !
In both my eyes he doubly sees himself ;
In each eye, one : swear by your double self,
And there's an oath of credit.

Bass. Nay, but hear me :
Pardon this fault, and by my soul I swear
I never more will break an oath with thee.

Ant. I once did lend my body for his wealth ; *
Which, but for him that had your husband's ring,
Had quite miscarried : I dare be bound again,
My soul upon the forfeit, that your lord
Will never more break faith advisedly.

Por. Then you shall be his surety. Give him this,
And bid him keep it better than the other.

Ant. Here, Lord Bassanio ; swear to keep this ring.

Bass. By heaven, it is the same I gave the doctor !

Por. I had it of him : pardon me, Bassanio.

Ner. And pardon me, my gentle Gratiano ;
For that same scrubbed boy, the doctor's clerk,
Did give me this.

Gra. Why, this is like the mending of highways
In summer, where the ways are fair enough.

Por. You are all amazed :
Here is a letter ; read it at your leisure ;
It comes from Padua, from Bellario :
There you shall find that Portia was the doctor,
Nerissa there her clerk : Lorenzo here

Shall witness I set forth as soon as you,
And even but now return'd ; I have not yet
Enter'd my house. Antonio, you are welcome ;
And I have better news in store for you
Than you expect : unseal this letter soon ;
There you shall find three of your argosies
Are richly come to harbour suddenly :
You shall not know by what strange accident
I chanced on this letter.

Ant. Sweet lady, you have given me life and living.

Bass. Were you the doctor and I knew you not ?

Gra. Were you the clerk ?

Por. How now, Lorenzo !

My clerk hath some good comforts too for you.

Ner. Ay, and I'll give them him without a fee.

There do I give to you and Jessica,
From the rich Jew, a special deed of gift,
After his death, of all he dies possess'd of.

Lor. Fair ladies, you drop manna in the way
Of starved people.

Por. It is almost morning,
And yet I am sure you are not satisfied
Of these events at full. Let us go in ;
And charge us there upon inter'gatories,
And we will answer all things faithfully.

[*Exeunt.*

GLOSSARY.

Advice, consideration, discretion.

Argosy, originally a vessel of Ragusa or Ragosa, a Rogosine; hence any ship of burden.

Breed, interest.

Condition, temper, quality.

Contain, to hold, retain.

Cope, to reward, to give in return.

Counterfeit, a portrait, an image.

Cover, to lay the table for dinner.

Eanling, a yealing, a lamb.

Envie, used sometimes for 'malice,' 'hatred.'

Danger, reach, control, power.

Fall, to let fall.

Fill-horse, shaft-horse.

Fraught, freighted.

Fulsome, lustful.

Gear, matter of business of any kind.

Get, to beget.

Gracious, pleasing, gentle.

Gramercy, grant mercy, much thanks.

Guard, to decorate.

Guiled, treacherous, deceitful.

Husbandry, thrift, management.

Imposition, command.

Impugn, to oppose.

Kind, nature.

Knäp, to snap, crack.

Liberal, licentious, coarse.

Ostent, show, appearance.

Patch, a mean fellow.

Patine, the metal disc on which the bread is placed in the administration of the Eucharist.

Possess, to inform.

Presence, high bearing.

Proper, handsome.

Prest, ready.

Quire, to sing in concert.

Rate, to scold.

Reason, to converse, discourse.

Re greet, a salutation.

Respective, respectful, thoughtful.

Remorse, pity.

Scant, to cut short, to spare.

Scrubbed, dwarfish, stunted.

Shrewd, cutting, harrowing.

Sbrive, to confess.

Slubber, to slur over.

Sometimes, formerly.

Sort, lot.

Squandered, scattered.

Tranect, a ferry.

Truth, used sometimes for 'honesty.'

Usance, usury.

Vailing, lowering.

Wealth, weal, advantage.

Wit, knowledge, wisdom.

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